the weekly Standard

JUNE 5, 2000

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NEW CHINA, OLD CHINA
JEFFREY BELL • JOHN DERBYSHIRE

Hating John Rocker

A Case Study in Liberal Hysteria

BY DENNIS PRAGER

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Charlton Heston
Actor

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Wayne LaPierre, NRA Executive Vice President

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Lowering the Bar

May was a bad month for presidential historians of the James Carville school. By majority vote, a six-member committee of the Arkansas Supreme Court—at least three of whom appear to be Democrats—recommended that Bill Clinton be disbarred for his various violations of legal ethics during the Paula Jones and Monica Lewinsky matters. This decision went rather far to explode the standard Carvillean thesis: that the president did nothing wrong enough to warrant any official sanction.

Less noticed was a similar and nearly as significant event. A federal judge demolished practically every complaint or allegation Carville and Co. ever made against Kenneth Starr and the Office of Independent Counsel. Dismissing three well-coordinated nuisance suits against Starr—filed by convicted Whitewater defendant Stephen Smith, indicted Kathleen Willey witness Julie Hiatt Steele, and Francis T. Mandanici, an apparently obsessed, Starr-hating Connecticut lawyer—district judge John F. Nangle used unusually brutal language.

The charge that Starr pressured Steele and Susan McDougal to lie and falsely implicate the president? "There is not one shred of support [for that claim] in the hundreds of pages of documents submitted" to him, Judge Nangle wrote. The contention that Starr violated the independent counsel statute by testifying before the House Judiciary Committee impeachment inquiry? "Ridiculous." The allegation that Starr abused his power by continuing to represent tobacco companies during his supervision of the Whitewater investigation? "Nonsense . . . absolutely ridiculous."

The argument that some conflict of interest tainted Starr's aborted acceptance of a deanship at Pepperdine University? "Very dubious." And "the stuff that dreams are made of." And "this Court has never heard a more absurd argument." And it is "totally illogical" and there is "no evidence" to substantiate it.

Nangle called Stephen Smith's complaints that *he* had been asked to lie by Starr "meritless" and "completely frivolous." And then Nangle announced that he was considering holding Mandanici in contempt of court.

We hear, by the way, that Jeffrey Toobin, the most respected scholar of the Carvillean school, is busy revising his recent book on the Lewinsky affair so as to remove a number of falsehoods about *Newsweek*'s Michael Isikoff. Given Toobin's central thesis (that Clinton was the "good guy in this struggle"), maybe he should save some time and just remainder the thing to the fiction bins. ♦

Recidivist Mudslinging from Al Gore

Add sloppy opposition research to the list of problems plaguing Al Gore's listless presidential campaign. In the course of a May 2 speech on crime, Gore launched a crude complaint about the criminal justice policies of Texas governor George W. Bush. It's really quite simple, Gore contended. Bush has emphasized incarceration over rehabilitation and has "slashed drug treatment programs and alcohol treatment programs for Texas prisoners." So naturally enough, Gore went on, "Recidivism has jumped by about 25 percent in Texas since [Bush] took office, to a level far above the national average."

Gosh. If the state's recidivism rate *had* jumped 25 percent under Bush, it would now be close to 50 percent. But when the *Washington Post* asked Gore spokesman Chris Lehane where the vice president had found this remarkable statistic, "Lehane said the 50 percent figure came from news reports, and he did not know the original source."

Not to worry, Chris. THE SCRAPBOOK can help. Gore's research drones invented their (entirely bogus) anti-Bush recidivism factoid by too-casually plundering from . . . this magazine! In our January 24, 2000 issue, an article by Andrew Peyton Thomas, "Completing the War on Crime," made passing note of the following figures: In Texas, "an average of 50 percent, and nationwide, an average of 33 percent, of inmates are rearrested within three years." Those figures were perfectly relevant to Thomas's broader argument.

And they are perfectly *irrelevant* to a judgment about George W. Bush. That's because the numbers (from the *1997 Corrections Yearbook*) track Texas inmates over a three-year period following their release in 1993. In 1993, Democrat Ann Richards was the governor of Texas. And she remained the governor of Texas until January 1995.

Oops. Here's the truth: Since Bush became governor, the recidivism rate in Texas has *dropped*—to 40.8 percent. Don't hold your breath waiting for Gore to correct the record. ♦

Now They Tell Us

Two of America's leading newspapers ran important stories on China last week. The *Wall Street Journal*'s Helene Cooper and Ian Johnson, in a front-page piece, laid out in minute detail the fact that many of the American corporations most eager for access to China's market actually have little interest in exporting goods from the

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U.S. to China. Their real plan is to invest in China, and to produce goods for the Chinese market within China, employing Chinese workers. This was exactly the argument labor opponents of permanent normal trade relations for China had been making.

A big story, no? And one especially relevant to last Wednesday's vote passing PNTR. For as Cooper and Johnson noted, business lobbyists had deliberately "played down" that vote's "likely impact on investment" because they were "leery of sounding supportive of labor-union arguments that the deal would prompt companies to move U.S. production to China." So when did the *Journal* run this article exposing the falsity of this particular pro-PNTR argument? The day after the vote.

The *Washington Post* also broke big news on China last week. On the front page, under a banner headline, the *Post* ran Thomas E. Ricks's 3,345 word story outlining how the Pentagon has shifted the focus of its concerns to Asia, and specifically, to China. Wargames, force planning, and strategic doctrine, according to Ricks, are all shifting in response to the growing perception among American strategists that a rising China poses the most formidable challenge to the United States in the years ahead.

Given the Clinton administration's insistence on the national security benefits that will accrue from passage of PNTR, this news, too, might have seemed relevant to congressional deliberations last week. And when did the *Post* run its story on the rising threat of China? Two days after the vote.

Forgive us for wondering if this is a coincidence. Both stories were long and painstakingly researched: Clearly, both had been in the works for weeks. Are we to suppose the *Journal* couldn't complete final editing on its story until one day after the PNTR vote? Was it coincidence that the *Post* couldn't get the Ricks story out until two days after the vote? We hear a lot about corporate influence on the editorial decisions of news organizations. This looks like a choice morsel for a media watchdog. ♦

A Better FEC

Bradley A. Smith, the First Amendment and election law expert whose persecution by various campaign finance "reformers" has been chronicled in these pages over the past year, was confirmed to a seat on the Federal Election Commission May 24. The Senate vote in favor of Smith's nomination was 64-35. Such opponents of free speech as Fred Wertheimer announced that they were appalled at the move. THE SCRAPBOOK, by contrast, is pleased as can be. Congratulations, Professor Smith. ♦

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Casual

H.M.S. Punafor

Aristotle, in *The Rhetoric*, describes the metaphor as the joining of dissimilars to show their similarity. He offers a number of examples from Homer, the franchise player of Greek literature, at one point noting his choice of the dawn as "rosy-fingered" as so much better than "crimson-fingered" or, worse, "red-fingered." Metaphor, Aristotle thought, "gives style, clearness, charm, and distinction [to speech and writing] as nothing else can." He also thought that, like the gift of a good singing voice or of swiftness afoot, metaphor-making "is not a thing whose use can be taught by one man to another." He neglected to add that, for your jollily perverse pedant (hey, Bo, that's me!), a really dopey metaphor can light up the sky.

I thought of Aristotle last week when two handsomely ill-constructed metaphors came my way. The first was hand-delivered by an earnest woman who said that she had read an article I had written in the *New Yorker* about bypass surgery and that she found it—you will have to believe me here—"heart-rending." The second, popping up a few hours later, appeared in the pages of *Beast and Man*, the excellent book by the English moral philosopher Mary Midgley, who, following hard upon a discussion of the animal-behaviorist Konrad Lorenz, writes that "Lorenz and his party have, however, a difficulty about method which also dogs me constantly in this book." In a discussion of animal ethologists, dogs is almost exactly the wrong metaphor, akin to saying that a broken toe can be a terrific pain in the neck.

Very common though such metaphors are—they are the metaphorical equivalent of unconscious puns—so far as I know, they have never been given a name. Aristotle provides a brief list of "inappropriate metaphors," which includes those that are too grand or theatrical or ridiculous, but these metaphors do not quite qualify under any of his categories, except loosely under the ridiculous. They're not good old-fashioned mixed metaphors. Nor are they those comic faux pas, such as William C. Carter, in his recent biography of Proust, falls into when he writes of his subject's *lycée* days: "Another piece of work, written for M. Claude Courbaud's literature class, showed that Marcel was making up for lost time."

No, these metaphors are in a class of their own; they are metaphors that forget that the function of the metaphor is to show the similarity of different things and instead end up showing the similarity of similar things, but always askew, invariably with unintended comic effect. Inept metaphors with the quality of unconscious puns I hereby name them—call out the minicams, this is a press-conference moment—punaphors.

Sex is of course plentiful in its punaphoric possibilities. In The Weekly Standard of some while back, someone (the guilty here shall all go nameless) wrote about Bill Clinton's "attempts to skirt the truth." But that is nothing—"a mere bag of shells," as Ralph Kramden used to say—next to the unconscious comic genius who wrote, "We'll only know the effect of passing out condoms to teenagers four or five years from now, when the rubber meets the road."

Sports is rich in punaphors. I recently heard a sports announcer say, "Using injured players as an excuse for a loss is, in my opinion, nothing more than looking for a crutch." Writing about the Johns Hopkins psychiatrist Paul McHugh, a journalist remarked that he is "never one to shrink from skewering the cults of Freud and Jung." A television weatherman in Chicago, in great fatuous seriousness, announced that "differing tolerances among people for the cold is really a matter of degree." In a *New York Times* obituary, a deceased woman who owned a button shop was described as "hooked on buttons." (Put a zipper on that punaphor.) "These new socks," I once heard a man say, "fit like a glove." In *Commentary*, a writer, talking about teenage suicide, lapsed sadly into punaphor when she wrote: "Perhaps rather than being cases of copying, all these suicides have something grave in common."

Food is another fine field for punaphors. "The butcher, in giving us this chili recipe," someone once said in my presence, "didn't give us a bum steer." At a restaurant that served especially large portions, I heard a novelist I know say, "They certainly don't spare the horses here," to which his companion, quite properly, rejoined, "Let's hope they do." A supermarket in my neighborhood ran an ad in the local press that announced, "We want your feedback." (Would it, if we returned it, give us back our money?) A friend not long ago said that she "could eat salad till the cows come home." As a carnivore, I felt called upon to reply that "I on the other hand could eat cows till the salad comes home."

Ain't language a gas, a groove, the very first wonder of the world? No one, surely, is ever likely to develop a more efficient form of miscommunication, no way.

Joseph Epstein

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Sprawl Across America

Fred Barnes claims that most American families prefer living in sprawling, car-dependent places like Fairfax County rather than dense city neighborhoods like Old Town Alexandria ("Suburban Beauty," May 22). That may be true, but only because Washington does not offer the kind of municipal choices found in the metro areas of Philadelphia, Chicago, and Cincinnati. When we lived in these older, northern cities, my wife and I chose to live in Haddonfield, N.J., Wheaton, Ill., and Terrace Park, Ohio, older suburbs that offered everything Fred Barnes values (larger lots, bigger houses, more space) but with the charming amenities of a real town (my kids could walk to school, parks, and Main Street shopping).

What Barnes fails to mention is that since the Great Depression, the federal government convinced states and localities to adopt zoning codes that have prevented the development of suburban areas along the older, traditional patterns that many Americans would prefer. The suburbs as we know them today, and especially what we see in Washington, D.C., are therefore not the spontaneous creation of what families necessarily want, but what has been forced upon them since World War Two by a statist approach to municipal planning. From a conservative viewpoint, the design of the newer suburbs reflects the Roosevelt legacy of Uncle Sam involving himself in all aspects of American life, from education to retirement planning to land use.

Barnes properly exposes the elitist and non-democratic mindset of Andres Duany's anti-sprawl movement, but Duany deserves some credit for trying to recover what has been lost in America. Barnes also fails to examine an assumption that both he and Duany share: that suburban development is friendlier to the automobile. A drive in downtown Washington, D.C., and Tyson's Corner during business hours will ironically confirm that the older, traditional, grid-pattern street arrangement can accommodate far more traffic than the new maze of winding avenues that were intended to suit the needs of a car-dependent society.

Robert W. Patterson
Washington, DC

Fred Barnes proves that "sprawl works" by asserting that he and his neighbors like it. But America is changing. "Married with children" now describes only 29 percent of American families. More and more people are not like Barnes's neighbors. Empty nesters, post-college yuppies, and even young families want an alternative to suburban sprawl and urban high-rises—they want real neighborhoods.

This, in turn, forces the poor out of working-class neighborhoods and into sprawl, where housing is cheaper. Once there, they find $5,000 per year in increased transportation costs, difficulty finding and accessing jobs, and cheaply built, crumbling housing stock.

Meanwhile, traditional neighborhoods are unaffordable because they are scarce. And they're scarce because most towns have banned development of new traditional neighborhoods.

Barnes says, "It's the anti-sprawl movement that wants to force a lifestyle and a housing pattern on unwilling Americans." But the new urbanist movement is here to enhance choice for the one-third of new home buyers who say they would like to live in a traditional neighborhood. This, in turn, will make life better for everyone, reducing overall driving and stabilizing housing costs in traditional neighborhoods.

Steven Bodzin
Congress for the New Urbanism
San Francisco, CA

I have long been astounded by the fact that conservatives trumpet the growth of the suburbs and their trappings. This seems to contradict some of the primary sentiments of conservatism: that we should honor our inheritance and that a humane scale is necessary in living environments and in government.

Fred Barnes's balanced review of Andres Duany's *Suburban Nation* brings up many good points. The most important one for conservatives to grasp is that the new urbanist movement, despite its centrist and slightly leftist supporters, is at base a conservative movement. A look at what any of the modern architectural magazines have to say about new urbanism will convince you of this fact. Conservatives should criticize new urbanism constructively, tempering the more enthusiastic new urbanists' overreaching utopianism.

One problem with new urbanism, which Barnes rightly points out, is the impracticality of new urbanist plans given Americans' current consumer behavior. But the fact that Americans choose cheaply made, aesthetically void homes and routinely move on in a few years does not strike me as a conservative victory. If anything, it breeds the rootlessness and emptiness so characteristic of our century.

Conservatives are rightly wary of new urbanists who hold doctrinaire attachments to rules and regulations, especially when enforced by government planners. But ideas regarding classical architecture, humane city planning, and civic art are coming to the fore after decades of devastation to our built environment. Conservatives should not miss this opportunity.

Carson Gross
San Francisco, CA

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A Choice, Not an Echo

A recurring theme in the mainstream press is that the presidential race doesn't offer much of a choice. George W. Bush and Al Gore aren't quite two peas in a pod, the story goes, but as candidates struggling to occupy the political center, they aren't that far apart either. In truth, there's some basis for this view. On health care, Bush has proposed an expensive program for the poor and uninsured that sounds like it came out of Bill Clinton's playbook. On China, Bush insists he'd treat China as a competitor and not a partner, but the distinction is more rhetorical than real. On school reform, he'd use the power of the Education Department in Washington as unashamedly as Gore. And so on.

But there *are* overriding issues on which Bush and Gore, and the Bush and Gore administrations, would differ dramatically—so dramatically that this presidential race is truly important. Here are three such issues: Social Security, missile defense, the rule of law. The fate of all three will be decided by the outcome of the presidential election.

Start with Social Security. Bush has come to grips with the demographic reality that before long there will be as few as two workers generating payroll taxes to fund benefits for each retiree. Gore hasn't. Instead, Gore has adopted the reactionary liberal stance that any change in Social Security will put the entire program at risk. Left unreformed, though, Social Security will soak up more and more of workers' earnings as payroll taxes soar, and this will create economic and social havoc. Gore argues that this possibility is too far in the future to be of concern now. This pleases organized labor, which is leading the charge against Bush's bold proposal to allow workers to invest a portion of their payroll taxes in the stock market (or bond market). Labor leaders, of course, are desperate to prevent workers from achieving financial gains in ways not negotiated by them in union contracts.

Bush hasn't spelled out the details of his reform plan and won't before Election Day. But from the outline he's presented, we know it's both modest and a necessary first step to save Social Security. Current recipients and those nearing retirement won't face benefit cuts. Meanwhile, workers now paying into the system will be able to invest perhaps 2 percent of their income, or roughly one-sixth of the 12.5 percent they fork over in payroll taxes. Given the stock market's average gain of 7 percent over time, they would build up a retirement nest egg and reduce the amount they'd need later in Social Security benefits. By itself, this won't save Social Security. But, especially if expanded beyond 2 percent, it would go a long way in that direction. And the point for 2000 is Bush would start in that direction. Gore wouldn't.

The same is true with missile defense. The Clinton administration, including Gore, is considering deployment of a minimal missile defense system in Alaska, but only if the Russians agree to amend the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty of 1972. This is likely to come to naught as the Russians are leery and Clinton, Gore, and the rest of the arms control crowd regard the ABM treaty, which was negotiated with the now-defunct Soviet Union, as sacrosanct. Even if the Russians go along, the Alaska site won't provide much protection. Bush, on the other hand, has proposed to build a missile defense system that would protect against the realistic threats in the foreseeable future—rogue states like Iraq, countries with small nuclear arsenals such as China, crazies, terrorists, an accidental launch. At the same time, he would reduce the number of American missiles aimed at Russia. This would ease Russian fears if a Bush administration took the perfectly legal step of pulling out of the ABM treaty altogether.

What's important to keep in mind is that an America with a missile defense system would also be better able to answer regional threats by the Saddam Husseins of the world. As Robert Kagan noted last week in the *Washington Post*, without such a defense system, a president would be fearful of challenging a belligerent move by a Saddam armed with nuclear missiles that could reach Europe and the United States. With a missile defense system in place, Saddam, and not the United States, would be deterred. As for China, it wants to deter American support for Taiwan. One way is by warning that Chinese missiles can reach Los Angeles. "The Chinese understand that a worried, vulnerable America is more likely to be pliant in negotiations over Taiwan's future than a confident America," Kagan notes. Again, the point for 2000 is that Bush promises real missile defense. Gore doesn't.

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Finally, the rule of law. If there's a single compelling *domestic* reason for ousting the Clinton-Gore regime, it's to clean up the sadly corrupted Justice Department. Virtually every week, there's fresh evidence that Clinton has turned Justice into a personal legal defense team. Two weeks ago, it was testimony by two FBI agents that a top Justice official had argued in 1996 against an independent counsel to probe Clinton-Gore's campaign finance abuses on the ground that Attorney General Janet Reno was under pressure, presumably from the White House, and might lose her job. Last week, we learned that the inspector general of the Defense Department found the Pentagon had violated the Privacy Act in revealing information about Linda Tripp, though Justice had kissed off any Privacy Act prosecution. This case involved exactly the kind of violation of privacy that sent Charles Colson to jail in Watergate. In the end, there's only one way to uproot the corruption at Justice and that's with a new administration from a different party.

There's another crucial issue of the law, the makeup of the Supreme Court. The court is at a crossroads. On states' rights and federalism, for example, it has made a number of important decisions in recent years, but only by 5-4 margins. Four justices recently accepted Congress's ludicrous argument that an alleged rape in southwest Virginia involved "interstate commerce" and thus could be the subject of a civil suit in federal court. With one more justice on their side, they would have prevailed. One or two more justices would also be decisive when the court rules, as it surely will during the next few years, on school choice, same-sex marriage, racial preferences, religion in politics, and abortion rights.

Once more, the point is the difference between Bush and Gore. Bush has vowed to nominate one type of Supreme Court justice, Gore another. A Bush court would approve of school choice (including private and religious schools), refuse to create a right to same-sex marriage, minimize racial preferences, and expand the public role of religion. A Gore court would do the opposite. After four or eight years of a Gore-shaped Supreme Court and federal judiciary, American constitutional law would no longer bear any relationship to the Constitution.

Reforming Social Security, missile defense, and the rule of law—who says the stakes aren't high on November 7?

—Fred Barnes, for the Editors

Michael Ramirez

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The Lebanon Debacle

Does Israel's retreat mark the beginning or the end of its demoralization? BY CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

ALL THAT WAS MISSING FROM the scene were the helicopters lifting people off the embassy roof. Otherwise, Israel's panicked evacuation from Lebanon last week looked eerily like America's last hours in Vietnam.

Lebanon was, in fact, Israel's Vietnam. The analogy is almost perfect: a guerrilla war that the conventional army was winning in military terms, but whose losses the home front could not sustain. The difference, of course, is that having withdrawn from Vietnam, the United States still had a buffer zone between it and the enemy: the Pacific Ocean. Israel has a fence.

Has there ever been a more defensive occupation? Israel occupied a small patch of Lebanon only because it had been used by various enemies to launch attacks against Israel's civilian settlements in the Galilee. This was territory that Israel never claimed, never developed, never exploited. (Given Israel's chronic water shortage, it could have greatly benefited from the waters of the Litani river. It never diverted a drop.) Israel sought only a buffer for its northern border.

Nonetheless, the U.N. Security Council passed one uncompromising resolution after another demanding Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon. Syria, with no such defensive requirements, has 35,000 troops in Lebanon. The "world community" has made no effort whatsoever to get their removal.

The response of the world to Israel's withdrawal is not encouraging. Israel earned no credit, just gloating about its humiliation. The Lebanese government has openly, contemptuously refused to police the border and guarantee security. The Hezbollah guerrillas who defeated Israel refuse to take yes for an answer, promising to keep fighting until Israel meets an escalating list of demands, ranging from the release of prisoners to the evacuation of a piece of the Golan Heights that Israel captured from Syria (!) in 1967 and that the Hezbollah now claims is really Lebanese territory.

The net effect of the withdrawal is that Israel now has a border with Iran. The Shiite guerrillas are not just ideologically committed to and militarily supplied by Iran, but they share the same radical Islamist anti-Zionism. Their pretext was liberation of sacred Lebanese territory. That pretext is now gone. We'll see whether they intend to carry out the fight, as they like to say, "until Jerusalem is liberated."

We will see also how the world reacts if they do. Land for peace: That has been the universal demand on Israel. Well, Israel has given up every inch of Lebanese territory. Under the land for peace formula, and under the U.N. resolutions ordering Israel out of Lebanon, both Lebanon and the United Nations should now deploy troops on the Israeli-Lebanese border to ensure tranquility.

In fact, neither of these feckless and somewhat fictional entities will do anything serious to stabilize the border. That is a job once again left to Israel itself. The problem is that Israel's deterrent capacity has now been seriously damaged.

For Israel, the retreat from Lebanon is a grave geostrategic setback. For the first time in 22 years, it faces an active, hostile, well-armed enemy right on its border. This is important. The Sinai desert is Israel's buffer with Egypt; the largely uninhabited Golan Heights are the buffer with Syria; the Jordan Valley and Negev—with the Dead Sea in between—are the buffer with Jordan. On its northern frontier, however, Israel today finds Hezbollah guerrillas just meters away, waving rifles, positioning tanks, and aiming Katyusha rockets at Israel's border villages and collective farms.

Hezbollah has the capacity to make northern Israel uninhabitable. The decision whether to do so, however, lies with Syria's President Assad. Assad wants to pressure Israel into a withdrawal from the Golan as complete and, possibly, as humiliating as the one that just occurred in Lebanon—one in which he could actually revise the internationally recognized border and take a piece of the Sea of Galilee.

Barak was quite willing to give him every inch of the Golan, until Assad upped the ante a few months ago by demanding control of the northeast part of the Sea of Galilee, which is entirely on Israel's side of the internationally recognized border. Talks broke down over this breathtakingly bold demand for Israeli territory. Now, however, Assad has a useful tool to pursue this objective.

The conventional wisdom is that, because Syria could turn Hezbollah on and off like a tap and thus control the flow of Israeli blood in the guerrilla war, Syria lost a bargaining chip when Israel withdrew from Lebanon. The conventional wisdom is wrong. Syria retains the bargaining chip because the guerrilla war option is not dead. It is indeed far more explosive. A sustained guerrilla war along the Israeli-Lebanese border would cause not just a few military casualties. It would kill many civilians. It could easily demoralize and quickly depopulate northern Israel. That is an extremely potent tool.

Assad would have to use it with

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A villager waves the Hezbollah flag across a gate separating Lebanon from Israel

great delicacy and precision. But use it he could. Hezbollah could start with small arms fire or a few Katyushas fired over the border to provoke an incident. Israel then would be in a terrible dilemma. If it retaliates in kind, it is simply inviting guerrilla war on its border and allowing the enemy to dictate the level of violence. Tit for tat might not even work. Hezbollah has rockets that can threaten large swaths of Israel. When Israel still had its security zone, Hezbollah's Katyushas could send only 300,000 Israelis into bomb shelters. Now that they are nine miles closer, they can put 800,000 Israelis—almost one in seven—into bomb shelters. A cross-border war of this sort would be intolerable for Israel.

The alternative—the only rational response—is for Israel to retaliate massively. The dilemma, of course, is that this risks a major war. Hitting Beirut is mandatory, but Lebanon does not make its own decisions. The point would be to bring Lebanese pressure on Assad to call off his dogs in the south. Assad, however, cares little for Lebanon. He is unlikely to bend. Barak would then be forced to carry out the threat he has already made to attack Syrian troops in the Bekka Valley. That could very easily trigger a new Arab-Israeli war.

The assumption that it would be an easy victory for Israel is false. Such a war could trigger a generalized Palestinian uprising, which would create a new front and make Israel's mobilization at home difficult. And Egypt, which has spent billions of American aid on very modern American weapons, has already begun speaking of joining the Arabs in a war provoked by Israel.

Israel's Lebanon problems do not start and end with geostrategy, however. The psychological effect of the Lebanon debacle might prove even more important in the long run. The picture of Israelis and their allies fleeing before triumphant guerrillas is one not often seen in the Arab world. It is already having its effect among West Bank Palestinians. Why should they agree to give the Jews anything in return for the West Bank and Jerusalem? Did not Hezbollah get Israel out of Lebanon for free?

And how did they do it? Constant guerrilla war, until the Israelis tired and gave up. The Palestinians had their own version of guerrilla war before the Oslo accords, the intifada. They recently staged a reprise, the "days of rage" rioting on the anniversary of Israel's independence on May 15. The temptation to produce a full-scale reenactment has only been strengthened by Hezbollah's success in Lebanon.

What's more, the fate of the South Lebanon Army, the local militia that sided with Israel against Hezbollah, is a lesson to all those Arabs in the Middle East who might be thinking of throwing their fate in with the Jews. The SLA was supposed to carry on like the South Vietnamese after the American withdrawal. Well, the South Vietnamese held out for two and a half years. SLA did not hold out for two and a half days. The sight of Israel's only Lebanese allies fleeing for their lives will give pause to any Palestinian or Jordanian or even Egyptian who thinks that acting friendly toward, making deals with, or relying on the Israelis is a good idea.

There is only one possible salutary aspect to this disastrous situation. Israel's decline has mostly been psy-

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chological. It is because of war weariness and exhaustion that it has been conceding territory unilaterally—both in Lebanon and on the West Bank—in the hope of depriving its enemies of a reason to want to fight on. But the appeasement hasn't worked. Israel is as vilified as ever in the region and even more threatened physically, both in the north and in the heartland, than it has been for decades.

The reality of their enemies coming ever closer to their gates, unmollified and indeed energized, might shock Israelis back into some renewed perception of reality. For the first time in two decades they have an active front on one of their borders. Under the old dispensation, with buffer zones all around, Israelis could go about their day-to-day lives under the illusion that they were living in some kind of European-like protectorate with vague enemies far away.

The enemies are not vague, and they are no longer far away. They will be there every night on Israeli television, as they were just a few nights ago, dancing at the Israeli border fence, chanting "I will kill you" to the Israelis on the other side.

That change in perception might be accompanied by a renewal of will. It has happened before. America was deeply demoralized and in general retreat after the Vietnam War. It took a series of setbacks in that *annus mirabilis* 1979—the invasion of Afghanistan, the communization of Nicaragua, and most important, the fall of the shah and the seizure of American hostages in Teheran—to shock America out of its geopolitical lethargy. There's nothing like an acute humiliation to wake up a sleeping giant.

Israelis are exhausted. But they are also tough. At some point, their neighbors may push a little too far. It won't take a Pearl Harbor. Israelis wanted to get out of Lebanon, but they did not like the way they were expelled. Israel's adversaries certainly have the upper hand today. But they would be wise not to push their luck too far tomorrow. ♦

Patrick Kennedy, Legal Genius

The Rhode Island congressman's novel theory of racketeering. BY MATT LABASH

OVER THE YEARS, Tom DeLay has suffered an impressive array of insults. Former senator Al D'Amato called him a "crazy right-wing wack-job," while *George* magazine deemed him "The Meanest Man in Congress." Columnist Molly Ivins suggested he bore the "air of a small-town car dealer." And during a spat on the House floor, Rep. David Obey allegedly called the majority whip an epithet that rhymes with "sock-tucker," while DeLay called the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin a "gutless chickens—t" and shoved Obey for good measure. But one thing DeLay has never been called is a racketeer. At least he hadn't until May 3. That's when Rep. Patrick Kennedy, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee chairman, announced in a press conference that the DCCC had filed a civil racketeering suit against DeLay and three nonprofit fund-raising groups.

Kennedy, along with DCCC attorney Robert Bauer, alleged that DeLay, through these "shadowy" organizations run by his close allies, was overseeing "an illegal political operation" that was circumventing election law by raising unseemly amounts of cash through "systematic extortion," while laundering the money through the organizations in order to "conceal . . . donors" without "public or legal accountability." (It warrants mentioning that none of the organizations is legally required to report its contributions or donors, any more than Patrick's father, Ted, is required to disclose the donors who have kicked in $350,000 to the soft-money arm of his PAC.)

As political theater, the press conference bore all the hallmarks of the malaprop king of the Kennedy family, a man who once said that he never had to worry about "making mends meet." There was Patrick's mangled syntax, the shrill overemphasis of every other syllable, and the gulping nervousness and pride as he became the first congressman ever to file a RICO suit against a colleague. Still, despite the helpful flowchart purportedly representing "DeLay's pattern of racketeering activity" and a stack of press clips that Kennedy and Bauer offered as their only evidence (the clips detailed DeLay's fund-raising methods but failed even to hint at extortion), the suit raised more questions than it answered, such as: If DeLay has engaged in criminal behavior, why is the DCCC seeking civil redress? How can they know DeLay extorted donors if they don't even know who the donors are? And most important: Is Patrick Kennedy compos mentis?

After all, he did admit last February at a Tipper Gore campaign stop, "I am on a lot of medications, for among other things, depression." And lately, he's been under duress after videotape was released that showed him shoving an airport security guard into a metal detector when she obstructed his path after he refused to check his unwieldy carry-on bag (carrying on the family tradition, Kennedy escaped charges and the security guard has been terminated). While the RICO suit has largely blown up in his face—even drawing friendly fire from Democrats such as Paul Begala, who wrote

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that the suit was wrong "ethically, legally and politically"—Kennedy deserves points for boldness. This election-year stunt, after all, comes after years of allegations of Democrats patting down Buddhist nuns and Chinese businessmen for illegal contributions (Kennedy himself was forced to return $5,000 from convicted felon Maria Hsia).

Still, Republicans aren't prepared to believe that Kennedy, who has long been regarded as Pinocchio to minority leader Richard Gephardt's Geppetto, is the brains behind the operation. "He couldn't brainstorm his way out of a paper bag," says Tony Rudy, DeLay's deputy chief of staff. "Putting it in racketeering terms," says the Republican National Committee's Mike Collins, "If the Kennedys were the Corleones, Patrick would be Fredo."

The man Republicans are crediting instead as the evil genius behind the RICO suit is Robert Bauer, a whiskered, bespectacled campaign-finance authority who looks more like a humanities professor than a pitbull litigator. Bauer, a managing partner at Washington, D.C.'s Perkins, Coie, has served as the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee's outside counsel since 1977, and the DCCC's attorney since 1981. Dry-witted and well-liked, even by some of his Republican rivals, Bauer has over the course of two decades become widely regarded as the Democrats' foremost expert on election law. He literally wrote the book on it, with the enchanting title *United States Federal Election Law: Federal Regulation of Political Campaign Finance and Participation* (Amazon.com sales rank: 1,548,526).

Over the course of two decades, Bauer, who sometimes bears the oxymoronic title "ethics lawyer," has become not merely the man Democrats turn to when navigating gift-ban considerations—such as when does legally scarfing lobbyists' hors d'oeuvres become enjoying an illegal meal ("It probably helps somewhat if you're standing," Bauer has said). He's also become their point man in attacking Republicans. Serving as outside counsel to everyone from Gephardt to Tom Daschle, Bauer was the lawyer who helped strategize the Clinton censure resolution that was the Democratic alternative to impeachment. He also incorporated James Carville's Education and Information Project, the "Def-Con 2" vehicle Carville used to wage war on Kenneth Starr. But no skirmish is

AP / Wide World Photos

Patrick Kennedy

too small for Bauer to join. In 1990, he attacked South Dakota senator Larry Pressler for letting his staff aid an elderly woman in writing a campaign-related letter to the editor. (She'd asked for typing assistance—because of her arthritis.)

DeLay staffer Tony Rudy calls Bauer "the most partisan lawyer in Washington"—a left-handed compliment of sorts in party-hack heaven. Many consider his RICO suit so aggressively frivolous that Bauer is now drawing comparisons to conservative gadfly Larry Klayman (who recently announced that his Judicial Watch is representing Donato Dalrymple, the man who fished Elián González out of the Atlantic, in a $100 million lawsuit against Janet Reno and other administration officials). When I ask Bauer if he has any plans to sue his own mother, as Klayman has, the comparison rankles, though he replies with glib judiciousness, "I'm not commenting on any pending matters."

Bauer's most important role, however, isn't playing offense, but defense. Unlike the flamboyant Bob Bennett or Abbe Lowell, Bauer has quietly become a Zelig, popping up in almost every case involving an ethically challenged Democrat, a gig that keeps him busy. When the House Ethics Committee in the early nineties published a list of the 22 top bad-check writers, Bauer represented five of them. During the marathon Hill hearings into Democrats' campaign finance abuses, Bauer or his firm represented no less than seven witnesses.

It's a tad ironic that the lawyer now accusing DeLay of unprecedented campaign finance abuses represented Richard Sullivan, the former DNC finance director and Johnny Chung party contact, in not one, but two fund-raising scandals. Chung, who pled guilty to using illegal straw donors while funneling thousands to the 1996 Clinton campaign, testified that Sullivan solicited a $125,000 donation a month after Sullivan said he'd grown suspicious that Chung was acting as an illegal conduit for Chinese contributions. While Sullivan has never been charged, the judge who sentenced Chung said that if Sullivan and his fellow DNC official Don Fowler "didn't know what was going on . . . they are the dumbest politicians I've ever seen." Sullivan was also asked to explain what he knew about a complex fund-swapping scheme where the Teamsters planned to pay $1 million to the DNC in return for $100,000 from DNC donors that would be funneled to Ron Carey's campaign for Teamster president (Carey's election was overturned, and the Teamsters' former political

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director was sentenced to three years in prison for similar schemes).

Bauer has also represented Vote Now '96, a non-profit voter registration group that was investigated for accepting contributions from foreign donors who were ineligible to give money to the Democratic party but who were steered to Vote Now by DNC officials expecting the group's independent expenditures to benefit Democrats in the elections (a scheme that bears striking similarity to the DeLay allegations—minus the foreign donors). It is also odd to see Bauer's sense of propriety so offended, since he represented former congressman Tony Coelho, who resigned before ethics police could catch him over an investment scandal, but not before the book *Honest Graft* canonized him as the Democrats' reigning shakedown artist. Bauer also represents Jacksonville, Florida's embattled Rep. Corrine Brown, who is currently under investigation by the House Ethics Committee for a series of suspect incidents, one of which includes the allegation that her daughter accepted a $50,000 Lexus from aides of a West African millionaire nicknamed "Baba," three months after Brown implored Janet Reno to allow Baba to go home to Africa before he could be sent to prison over a bribery charge in Miami. The whole transaction might have been a mistake. One of Baba's attorneys said the car was intended for Brown herself, as a "gesture of friendship."

As for the DeLay case, many Democrats don't give it much chance of achieving liftoff. "It's idiotic," says one prominent Democratic consultant. Even James Carville, the high priest of partisan warfare, is sitting this one out. "I'm very skeptical about using the courts to settle political differences," he says. Still, Bauer might be onto something. After all, when a lawyer with his expertise says he's spotted a politician who'll stop at nothing to bend the law for his own political gain, he ought to know. Just look at his clients. ♦

The Asian Reagan

Lee Teng-hui, anti-Communist and democrat, transformed Taiwan's politics. BY JEFFREY BELL

Taipei, Taiwan

ONLY FIVE DAYS before the end of his tumultuous 12 years as president of the Republic of China on Taiwan, Lee Teng-hui appeared in a relaxed, reflective mood. Speaking with a small delegation of American sympathizers assembled and led by American Conservative Union chairman David Keene, the 77-year-old Lee looked at his visitors with sudden animation and quoted a famous question from the 16th chapter of the Gospel of John: "*Quo vadis?*" It was, he said, a question he had always forced himself to confront in his political life: "Where are you going?"

Lee's answers to this question were hardly ever what people expected. A native Taiwanese who went to university in Japan and has never set foot on the Chinese mainland, Lee was groomed for the leadership of the Republic of China and of its governing party, the Kuomintang, by the late president Chiang Ching-kuo, son and political heir of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. Considered a trusted "team player" as vice president in the 1980s, Lee succeeded to the presidency on the death of the younger Chiang in 1988 and became known for remoteness, decisiveness, and unexpected public moves.

He contributed greatly to Taiwan's high-tech economic boom by striving to decouple Kuomintang machine politics from business decision-making. He took his party's ideological indoctrination out of the schools. He liberated the press and opposition parties and instituted democratic elections, first for the National Assembly and ultimately (in 1996) the presidency. By a hard-boiled, foreign-aid-centered diplomacy, he raised Taiwan's international profile, and he legalized Taiwanese investment on the mainland for the first time. He even increased the number of nations (from 22 to 29) granting full diplomatic recognition to Taipei in preference to Beijing.

Despite all these achievements, around 1994 Taiwan faced a grave threat to its survival: a public shift in the Clinton administration toward a deeply pro-Beijing policy. For all Taiwan's engagement with the rest of the world on trade, investment, and even diplomatic issues, the United States is Taiwan's only lifeline against the potential military threat posed by the mainland. It was in 1994 that Bill Clinton dropped human rights as a factor in his China trade policy. By 1996, the administration's last significant pro-human rights policy makers, Warren Christopher and Anthony Lake, were lame ducks who had been pushed aside by Lake's then deputy at the National Security Council, Samuel Berger, and others who were willing to subordinate virtually all other factors to the expanding American trade with China. As we now know, the policy shift coincided with the 1995-96 Clinton fund-raising scandals.

Lee believed Taiwan was being marginalized. That is the context in which he engineered his various in-your-face confrontations with Beijing, beginning with his visit to Cornell University in 1995. The pivotal moment was the first popular vote ever for president of the Republic of China, in which Lee won more than 70 percent, while Chinese-launched test missiles were landing in the Taiwan Strait. By 1999, when Lee called for negotiations based on equal sovereignty of the two Chinas, the world

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was no longer in danger of forgetting Taiwan.

Accused by Kuomintang elders of betraying the party that had elevated him to power, Lee proved to be Chinese communism's worst nightmare. In fact, his triumph over domestic authoritarianism was the basis of his threat to the oligarchy in Beijing. By bringing a free and orderly democracy to a Chinese culture for the first time in history, making possible the victory of the pro-independence Democratic Progressive party in the March 18, 2000, presidential election, Lee more than anyone else put the lie to the recently fashionable idea that East Asians need "Asian values," a euphemism for political repression, to produce their high-tech miracles. Taiwanese companies today account for more than half of the world's production of computer notebooks, a remarkable position of dominance for a nation of 23 million, and a position achieved during the intense decade of democratic reforms forced through almost single-handedly by Lee Teng-hui.

Lee retires from the presidency at the age at which Ronald Reagan left the White House. Indeed, Lee's ability to overcome the disdain of political elites by mobilizing average voters to achieve victory after victory on behalf of his own almost mystical vision of human dignity makes the parallel with Reagan quite striking.

Like Lee, Reagan left office at the peak of his popularity; but only later could such events as the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the Soviet Union make clear that the Reagan presidency had been transformative, not just of his nation but the world. Lee finds himself in a similar ambiguous position as he gives way to Chen Shui-bian, a gifted and much younger leader (49 years old) with a collegial, consensus-driven political style the polar opposite of Lee's.

So different from his predecessors in most ways, Lee was the fifth consecutive Protestant Christian head of the Republic of China (and of the Kuomintang). The five were all effective modernizers in their different ways. As President Lee spoke with our delegation in mid-May, it was impossible not to notice the imposing portrait of Sun Yat-sen, the founder of modern China and the only other democrat of the five, directly above the president's chair. It seemed fitting, I observed, that the democratic revolution begun by Sun so early in the 20th century was being brought to fruition in Taiwan by his political descendant at the dawn of the 21st. Lee seemed pleased by the comparison. The seemingly innocuous exchange was widely reported in the Taiwanese press the next day, and we later learned that Lee's aides had released the remarks shortly after the private meeting with our delegation. One rather garbled version implied the American Conservative Union was planning to make a documentary film about the president entitled *Mr. Democracy*.

Lee Teng-Hui

Patrick Arrasmith

If a film is ever made about Lee, it could portray him as a hero who pushed the Chinese people decisively toward a democratic future, or conceivably, as a feckless radical who provoked an unstable regime in Beijing to the brink of war, or beyond. As to his own future, Lee expressed to us a desire to avoid becoming an adviser to President Chen, and he has publicly speculated that he may wind up as a Christian missionary to Taiwan's aborigines. The one thing that is clear as Taiwan inaugurates a new president—the non-Christian, non-Kuomintang, former political prisoner Chen Shui-bian—is that Lee has succeeded in posing his favorite question to all Chinese, on the mainland and in their many overseas habitats as well: *Quo vadis?* ♦

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Hitting the Great Wall of China

Beijing nurses a deep-seated persecution complex.

BY JOHN DERBYSHIRE

HE QINGLIAN is a Chinese journalist, famous in her own country for fearless criticism of her government's policies. Her book, *The Pitfalls of Modernization*, is currently being translated by Lawrence Sullivan of Adelphi University. She has been visiting the United States to meet with other journalists and China scholars and recently had lunch with me in midtown Manhattan.

Things went all right until we arrived at what I think of privately as the National Question. The reason He QingLian wanted to meet with me was an article I wrote some months ago for this magazine, dealing with the independence movement in Xinjiang ("Hell, No, Uighurs Won't Go," December 6, 1999). She laid into the article with vigor. It was "nonsense." I should read some Chinese history. Xinjiang had been under Chinese influence for thousands of years. It was now an inalienable part of the motherland. Same for Tibet, which my article mentioned *en passant*. How would Americans feel if Hawaii suddenly demanded independence?

QingLian had a copy of my article and said it was disgraceful for me to use the phrase "Chinese Imperialism." China had been a *victim* of imperialism! How could China even *think* of practicing imperialism? Disgraceful! I made some obvious responses with, of course, no effect at all.

We had, in fact, hit the wall. You always do hit the wall with the Chinese when the National Question comes up. It makes no difference if you are talking with Communists or Nationalists, old or young, government flacks or dissidents. I found QingLian formidably articulate. She defended her opinions with the force of a strong intellect.

This experience is very familiar to me. You are sitting there kicking ideas around with some friendly, witty, well-educated, and worldly people. Then the National Question comes up, and suddenly the façade of reason and sophistication drops away and you are confronted by something cold, hostile, and atavistic—the reptilian brain stem. The attachment of the Chinese to every inch of the territory of the old Manchu empire is rooted so deep it cannot be touched by reason or argument.

The usual reaction of foreigners to this sense of national grievance is to grovel: Yes, we foreigners did wicked things.

The same applies to the resentment the Chinese feel for the humiliations inflicted upon them in the nineteenth century by Japan and the European powers. To an outsider, this seems a little unfair. By far the larger part of the Chinese people's sufferings these past 200 years has been visited on them by their own countrymen. The greatest calamity to afflict China in the nineteenth century was not the depredations of foreign imperialism, but the Taiping Rebellion, an entirely Chinese phenomenon.

Similarly, if there is a prize awarded in hell for murdering Chinese people, the easy winner for the twentieth century division is Mao. All this is forgotten in the fixation on foreign wickedness. A well-adjusted Chinese citizen is expected to have "moved on" from the horrors of Maoism (1949-76) but to be fuming with great indignation at the Opium Wars (1839-42).

The usual reaction of foreigners to this massive sense of national grievance is to grovel. Yes, indeed, we foreigners did very wicked things in the past. I used to take this line myself, but no longer do. To respond in this way, I believe, is to feed a dangerous psychosis. For all their veneer of sophistication and modernity, the Chinese are trapped in a pre-modern, almost prehistoric view of their own nationality—a view that has been cultivated very carefully by the Communists. The modern history syllabus of mainland schools is more or less constructed around it.

State-produced television documentaries and movies, novels and stories, newspaper and magazine articles, and even billboards deliver constant reinforcement of the message: *China has been wronged. Our territory is sacred; but foreigners still have designs on it.* I have not the slightest doubt that the Chinese government could easily whip up their people into a war frenzy on behalf of the "recovery" of Taiwan, or the retention of Tibet, or the reconquest of Outer Mongolia.

Those who favor closer engagement with China speak of the importance of exposing the Chinese people to our notions of democracy, openness, and free enterprise. I have bad news: No Chinese individual—not even the best-educated, most worldly of them, like He QingLian—really gives a fig for our ideas about these things when such ideas collide with their own atavistic nationalism.

One of the clear lessons of modern history is that no power of the imperial-despotic type can attain political modernity until it has shed its colonial possessions and the mental attitudes that go with them. In the case of China, there is no sign that this is happening—not the merest, slightest, faintest sign. ♦

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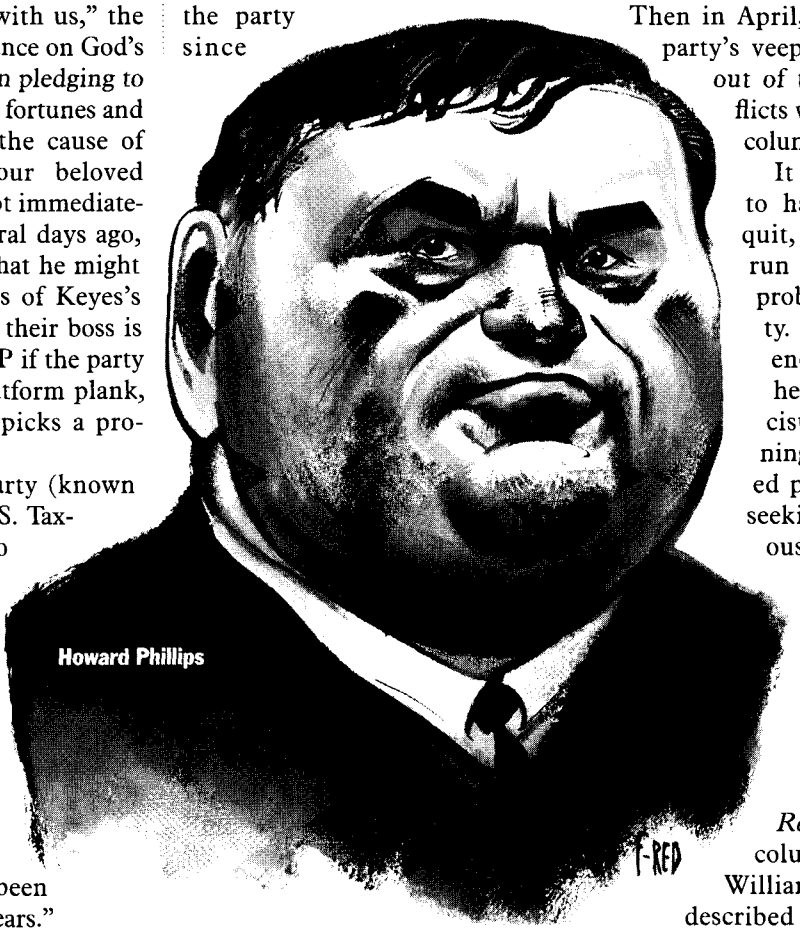
Will Keyes Go Fifth Party?

Howard Phillips's Constitution party romances its dream candidate. BY TUCKER CARLSON

IN MARCH, the chairman of the Constitution party, a little-known but very conservative political party based in suburban Virginia, wrote a letter to Alan Keyes urging him to leave the GOP. "We encourage you to come and join with us," the letter said, "in firm reliance on God's divine providence and in pledging to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor for the cause of restoring health to our beloved Republic." Keyes did not immediately respond. Then, several days ago, he seemed to indicate that he might be interested. Members of Keyes's staff told reporters that their boss is set to split with the GOP if the party weakens its pro-life platform plank, or if George W. Bush picks a pro-choice running mate.

The Constitution party (known until last year as the U.S. Taxpayers party) wasted no time in offering Keyes a starring role. Howard Phillips, the party's veteran presidential candidate, promptly volunteered to step aside and let Keyes head the ticket. "Alan Keyes has a real following," Phillips says admiringly. "I've been wooing him for many years."

Will it happen? Keyes can be as hard to reach as a real presidential candidate, so late last week there was no word from him directly. According to his press secretary, however, Keyes has bigger things on his mind. "All of his mental energy is being put to keeping the Republican party together," says Connie Hair, calling on a cell phone from a Keyes event in Montana. (Keyes is still on the road campaigning about four days a week.) "He has been committed to the party since its inception, when it freed his forebears." At this point, says Hair, Keyes hasn't even thought about running for president on another party's ticket.



Howard Phillips

"On the other hand," Keyes told *Human Events* recently in one of his fabulous, count-the-clauses-if-you-dare sentences, "some day, if there is some great departure, I'm an American and a human being, a person, I hope, of integrity to my God before I'm a partisan of any kind whatsoever."

In other words: Go squishy on abortion and I bolt.

The Constitution party is fervently hoping he bolts their way. So far its candidates have suffered an alarming rate of attrition. Last summer, Senator Bob Smith of New Hampshire left the GOP, telling friends that he planned to continue his bid for the White House as a Constitution candidate. Within a short time, Smith changed his mind and became a Republican again. Then in April, Joseph Sobran, the party's veep candidate, dropped out of the race, citing conflicts with his other job as a columnist.

It can be embarrassing to have your candidates quit, though in the long run Sobran's departure probably helped the party. Sobran is amiable enough in person, and he is a talented polemicist. But if you're running a small, underfunded political party that is seeking to be taken seriously by the rest of the world, then Joseph Sobran probably isn't a great choice as a nominee. In the early 1990s, Sobran was fired from his longtime job at *National Review* for producing columns that editor William F. Buckley described as indefensible. Sobran started his own website, and began to devote even more of his time to writing about Jews. This spring, while still a vice presidential candidate, Sobran wrote an essay that sought to explain McCain's popularity with the national media. The verdict: "Posing as a patriot, he panders to the Israel lobby." This, Sobran concluded, "is a large reason why so

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Illustration by Fred Harper

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much of the press adores him." (The column is still posted on the Constitution party's website.).

The Bush campaign doesn't seem concerned about the prospect that Keyes will go third party. Keyes is unlikely to cut into Bush's support directly. While many Republicans enjoy watching him—Keyes did well in surveys of viewers after the debates—far fewer are willing to take the radical step of voting for him. After many months of campaigning, Keyes has picked up only 10 delegates.

But Keyes could still cause problems for Bush. For one thing, he could make a scene. In 1996, Keyes won his way back into the Republican debates by staging a hunger strike, and then got himself arrested while protesting outside a television station in Atlanta. During this year's primaries, no one even tried to prevent Keyes from appearing with the other, employed candidates. Keep Keyes out? No way, replied McCain strategist Mike Murphy shortly before a debate in February. "He'd throw open his shirt and there would be dynamite strapped to his chest."

Keyes's success in the debates is part of the other reason Bush strategists should think twice before antagonizing him. Keyes has a constituency, mostly of Christian pro-lifers who have seen him on television. "Alan Keyes is a hero to those people," says Howard Phillips, and that is probably not far off. These voters may not want Keyes to be president, exactly, but his opinion still matters to them. What if Keyes were to devote himself full-time to convincing evangelicals not to vote for Bush? Does the Bush campaign need that? Probably not.

For Bush, the choice is simple, says Connie Hair: Tamper with the party platform or pick an unacceptable running mate and he wins a wildly articulate enemy with a national audience and lots of free time. Or he can keep the party pro-life. In that case, says Hair, "The day after the convention we'll be working for Bush." ♦

Leave It to Lazio

Can the Long Island Republican upset Hillary Clinton? BY MATTHEW REES

THE *NEW YORK TIMES* has described Rick Lazio, the 42-year-old Republican congressman running for the Senate against Hillary Rodham Clinton, as someone who "looks more like Beaver Cleaver than most other members of Congress." The paper is not alone in making light of his appearance. The *New York Post* calls him "boyishly cute," while the *New York Observer* has panned him as a "puffed-up putzhead . . . whose only apparent attributes are his telegenic dimples." Translation: With so little stature, Clinton and her advisers will turn Lazio into roadkill.

But maybe not. Lazio's first week as Clinton's opponent was more successful than anyone predicted. His travels throughout the state received glowing coverage, and Republicans (and some Democrats) are citing his "kinder, gentler" brand of politics, and his work ethic, as proof he's better positioned than Rudolph Giuliani to defeat Clinton. The fact that Clinton's surrogates, and Clinton herself, began attacking Lazio as a troglodyte as soon as he announced his candidacy on May 20 signals the seriousness with which they view him. Indeed, while a John Zogby poll showed Lazio trailing Clinton by 14 points at the time of his announcement, just five days later another Zogby poll showed the margin had narrowed to two points.

The scenario under which Lazio defeats Clinton is simple. Unlike Giuliani, he unites New York's Republican and Conservative parties, and with his moderate stand on abortion, gun control, and the environment, he wins over independents in the suburbs of New York City and upstate. While he may not fare as well in the city as Giuliani, that's partly neutralized by the fact that black voters won't be as motivated to turn out against him. Finally, polls by Zogby and others show that Clinton never pulls more than 46 percent statewide, no matter who the opponent, and she's so well known that improvement in her numbers is unlikely.

Yet there is an equally compelling, if not more compelling, scenario under which Clinton wins. To begin with, for every three Republicans in New York state, there are five Democrats. More important, the state is fertile Clinton territory: It gave Bill his widest margin of victory of any state in the 1996 election, 29 points. Next, the Nassau County machine that's been instrumental in past GOP victories statewide has collapsed (the county legislature has turned Democratic for the first time in decades). As for the unions, they'll present a united front against Lazio, which would not have been the case with Giuliani. Last, the campaign of George W. Bush has already signaled it's not going to wage a serious statewide effort in New York, thus depriving Lazio of money and manpower he's bound to need.

A Clinton adviser cites a few other reasons why Democrats are confident. "New Yorkers value their self identity as the biggest, best, brashest, and brightest, and they tend to elect individuals like Moynihan, D'Amato, and Cuomo who reflect that. Hillary fits that bill. Lazio clearly does not." The adviser also notes that Lazio, while billing himself as a moderate, has cast a number of votes that could come back to haunt him (he's zig-zagged on gun control and twice opposed the patients' bill of rights). The Clinton campaign is also likely to portray him as a tool of the House Republican leadership—he's a top deputy to Dick Armey—something they couldn't have done with Giuliani.

Matthew Rees is a staff writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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Clinton could, however, face a few problems in trying to portray Lazio as a wild-eyed Republican. With his sunny, Boy Scout disposition, he doesn't fit the caricature. He has also dissented enough from GOP orthodoxy to muddy the waters (the Republican Leadership Council, a moderate GOP group, has been distributing statements made by President Clinton praising Lazio for some of these votes). Given the stature gap between the candidates, if Clinton gets in a fight with Lazio, she risks elevating him to virtually equal standing.

A wild card is each candidate's paucity of campaign experience. Since his upset victory over House veteran Tom Downey in 1992, Lazio hasn't faced a really tough race. His decision to hire Republican image-meister Mike Murphy will allay some of the doubts about whether he's ready for such a high-profile campaign, though House GOP insiders still whisper that he can become easily flustered when under the klieg lights.

The same goes for Clinton. While a campaign veteran, she's always been in a supporting role. Now, without Giuliani in the race, she will undergo heightened scrutiny on a number of delicate issues, from carpetbagging to cattle futures. And despite her boasts of having visited every one of New York's 62 counties, most of her "town meetings" have had all the spontaneity of pro-Elián demonstrations in Havana. Noting her failure so far to make many unscripted appearances—whereas Lazio was a guest on all five of the Sunday-morning talk shows May 21—Murphy asks, "How can Hillary handle Jesse Helms if she can't handle Cokie Roberts?"

It's a fair question, as is another one the Lazio campaign will be asking: "What has Hillary Clinton ever done for the state of New York?" In the end, though, with Giuliani out of the race and Hillary mostly running as a clone of Bill, some believe the contest will boil down to a referendum on Clintonism. Both campaigns say they'll be perfectly happy with that; but when they say so, the Clinton people sound a tad more confident. ♦

Spin Control at Columbine

The final report on the shootings fails to answer the important questions. BY DAVID B. KOPEL

THE RECENT RELEASE of the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office report on the Columbine High School murders provides a great deal of horrifying detail about the tragedy—but carefully finesses the police inaction that gave the killers a free hand inside the school building.

The report (which is available at the *Denver Post* website and can be purchased on CD/ROM) appears to have been created with litigation in mind. A major preview was given to *Salon.com* last September, along with public statements that the report would be released in November. Then in December, the *Rocky Mountain News* got its own preview, enough for a week's worth of stories. The public was told that the report would be out in January.

But the report was finally released only after the one-year tort statute of limitations had passed, on April 20, 2000. On that day, all of the claims made by families wishing to sue the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office were known.

"My reaction to this version of events is that they must have hired a fiction writer," opined Peter Grenier, the lawyer for Angela Sanders, daughter of science teacher Dave Sanders who bled to death while waiting for hours to be rescued. Sanders had been shot while he was holding a door open for students to run to safety. Locked in a second-story room with two Eagle Scouts and other students, Sanders likely would have survived if he had received medical attention before three o'clock (when the sheriff's report says a paramedic finally reached him) or four o'clock (the time the attorney for Sanders's family says help arrived). The sheriff's report fails to mention the fact that the students in the room with Sanders were in constant communication with 911 operators and told the operators about his deteriorating condition.

According to the report, nothing law enforcement could have done differently would have saved any lives. This claim is dubious, even based on the report's version of the facts.

The two killers began their shooting outside the school entrance and were quickly confronted by the sheriff's deputy assigned to the school. A gun battle ensued, with neither side scoring any hits, as they were shooting from 60 yards apart. The killers then entered the building and began shooting students in the hallway; then they went into the library, where they started to execute 10 students and wound 12 more.

By 11:30 A.M., when the library killings were just beginning, five more deputies were on the scene. Why didn't any of the deputies pursue the killers into the building? The report doesn't say. At the press conference releasing the report, the Jefferson County spokesperson said that the decision not to enter was beyond the scope of the report.

The main door to the library is about 15 steps away from where the killers entered the building. Inside the library was teacher Patti Nielson with 55 students. She called 911 at 11:25 and begged, "We need police here." The 911 operator responded, "Okay, we're getting them there." The operator ordered Nielson to keep the students in the library.

David B. Kopel is research director at the Independence Institute, a Colorado think tank.

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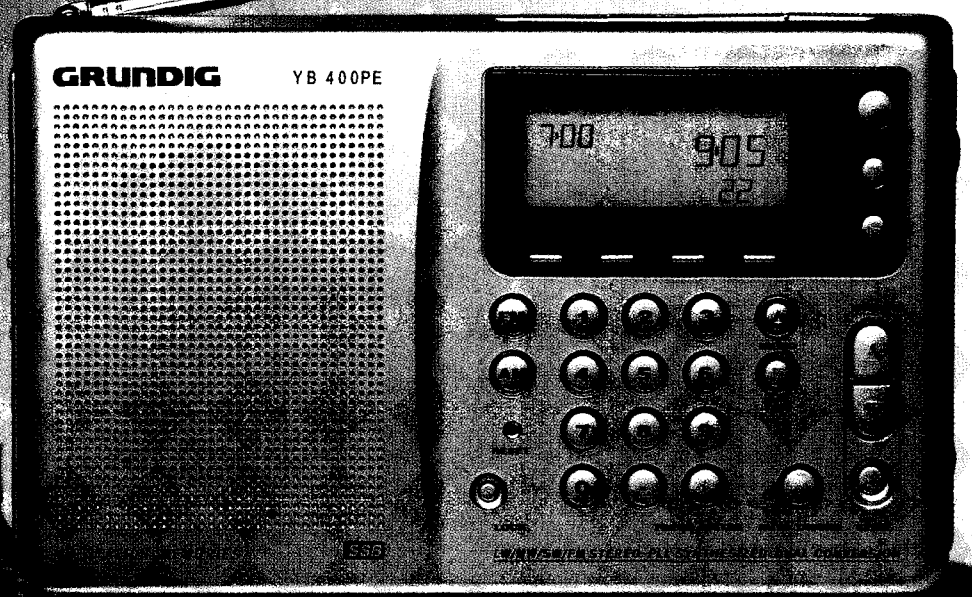

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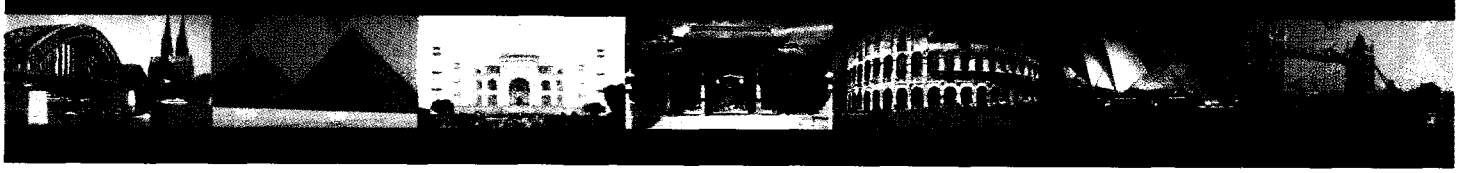

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The report admits that the police did not enter the library until four hours later, at 3:22 P.M. What if the 911 operator had told Nielson the real situation: "Some police are already at the school, and lots more are coming. But the police won't enter the library —even if the killers are known to be there—for several more hours."

Had Nielson known that the police were not coming, she could have led the students out of the library's emergency exit. Then, every one of the 10 students who died in the library would have lived. The killers did not enter the library until 11:29—four minutes after the 911 operator told Nielson to keep the students in place because the police were coming.

According to the report's timeline, the library killings ended within 8 minutes of the murderers' entering the room. The killers then roamed the building, tried to ignite bombs but failed, and returned to the library before noon. They shot out the window at some police on the ground who were tending to wounded students. The police returned gunfire, and the killers retreated from the window.

While the *Rocky Mountain News* has for much of the last year been extremely uncurious about possible mistakes made by the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department, the report appears to have changed attitudes, at least on the editorial side. As the *Rocky* pointed out in its lead editorial, the 911 connection from the library made it clear that the killers were there and that killing was taking place. When the killers temporarily left the library, the students who were able to flee did so and told the police what had happened. When the gunfire from the library resumed around noon, it was again apparent that the killers were in the library.

Yet the library turned out to be the last place in the entire building that police would enter—over three hours after the killers had committed suicide. Still, the report contends, "The number of law enforcement officers on scene within minutes of the reported shootings plus the entry of SWAT inside the school minutes before their suicides denied the gunmen additional time to plan further actions or take other lives or hostages."

In fact, the first SWAT team entered the building at 12:06, on the east side, as far from the library as possible. The first SWAT team to go in the west side of the building did not enter until after 1:00.

AP / Wide World Photos

Jefferson County deputies helping evacuate the school

Why didn't any deputy or SWAT officer ever go through the west entrance, just a few feet from the library door? The report claims that a "live" bomb at the doorway prevented anyone from going in. But the report elsewhere acknowledges that many students fled the school through that very door.

Why was the last place the killers were spotted also the last place to be secured? The report does not specifically say. But the real reason may appear elsewhere in the report: The police commanders were worried that "some type of terrorist unit" could be taking hostages or preparing an ambush.

An extremely reasonable concern, given the chaos of the situation. Yet as Randy Brown, father of a Columbine student asks, "Why don't people get mad? Don't they get it? They let children die."

The events of April 20, 1999, suggest that government employees—even police officers who are paid to take risks and teachers responsible for the welfare of children—will not automatically risk their lives when put to the ultimate test. Patti Nielson rejected the 911 operator's instruction to get out from under a table and lock the library door while the two killers were outside in the hallway. She explained—and who doesn't sympathize?—"I've got three kids."

A willingness to risk all in the line of duty demands the heroism of a Dave Sanders. But such self-sacrifice is more apt to be forthcoming from those whose training prepares them for it. Fortunately, some law enforcement agencies are learning lessons from Columbine, even though Jefferson County pretends that nothing could have been done better. Writing in the *Daily Oklahoman*, Ken McNair, chief of the Putnam City Campus Police Department, acknowledges that "Columbine was a very hard lesson for the law enforcement strategy of limiting responding officers to perimeter control." Because perimeter control brought disastrous results at Columbine, new tactics are being tried in Oklahoma. Writes McNair, "The gist of the Oklahoma approach by the responding officer is to engage and neutralize any threats until supported or relieved." In other words, keep trying to kill the perpetrators; if they get away, follow them.

These changes in Oklahoma deserve at least as much attention as the spin control coming from Colorado. Nobody is safer if we allow ourselves to believe—as Janet Reno claimed in a statement quoted at the beginning of the sheriff's report—that the Columbine events have "shown the nation and the world America's finest in crisis." ♦

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Al's Risky Scheme

Why Gore prefers outdated arms control to a national missile defense. BY ALEXANDER ROSE

LAST WEEK, George W. Bush finally came out and said it: "Leave the Cold War behind," he implored. Let us "build effective missile defenses" designed to protect "all 50 states and our friends and allies and deployed forces overseas."

With a surplus in the Treasury, the governor was bullish about overcoming the technological challenges presented by such a complex system. Afterward, all the Gore campaign could manage in reply was the robotically anodyne statement that, yes, the vice president too wants "a responsible and practical defense against a ballistic missile attack."

The Bush-Gore exchange suggests that the political battle over some sort of missile defense has now been won by the Republicans. It's just that Gore wants a national missile defense for the sake of arms control. That's why Gore's every statement on the subject comes with the caveat that a decision to proceed will hinge on a missile defense's "impact on our ability to protect arms control."

So under a Gore administration, after we get the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and START III in place, anything more than a bare-bones missile defense will be superfluous, since the world will—presumably—be safe from the nuclear scourge. In that instance, a modest battery of land-based interceptors in Alaska should do the trick, rather than the expansive schemes favored by the very same Republicans who torpedoed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Hence the need to circulate scare stories about the "massive spending" involved in developing a "scientifically unfeasible" missile defense system that will lead to the "abolition of the ABM treaty" and an inevitable "arms race."

Despite being repeated ad nauseam as self-evident truths in the media, these charges hold little water. The cost, often touted as a terrifyingly high "$60 billion and upwards," is not a lump sum or even a recurring cost. The Congressional Budget Office's April report found that even if the national missile defense program were expanded to Capability 3—the "most extensive and sophisticated stage"—it would cost only $48.8 billion between its initial deployment phase in 2005 and completion 10 years later. That's about $5 billion annually, which includes design, testing, procurement, construction, and operations. Considering the Pentagon's budget last year was $286 billion, this is a small price to pay for peace of mind.

That's assuming the national missile defense works. Since April, when a joint Union of Concerned Scientists/MIT report highlighted the danger posed by enemy countermeasures, which could confuse the interceptor into thinking the simplest of decoys was a real warhead, the "scientific unfeasibility" of missile defenses has become the mantra of the opponents.

The aim of the Union of Concerned Scientists report, of course, is not constructive criticism: It is to abort any missile defense on the dubious grounds that there is no defense against the offense. French president Jacques Chirac (who opposes missile defense) recently claimed that "ever since men began waging war, you will see that there's a permanent race between sword and shield. The sword always wins." But the dialectic of warfare is far more dynamic. For every offensive weapon, there is a defensive weapon capable of being developed to mitigate its effects; and defensive superiority eventually is chipped away by a new offensive weapon.

Nevertheless, the unfeasibility argument links nicely to missile defense critics' obsession with the 1972 ABM treaty, a monument to the Doctrine of the Offensive. Once, it is true, the defensive technology did not exist to stop a nuclear strike; instead, deterrence was employed in the form of mutual assured destruction. But the ABM treaty has been overtaken by technological advances. And if the anti-missile technology exists, as Henry Kissinger rumbled after Bush's speech, then "it cannot be a strategic objective, cannot be a political objective, and cannot be a moral objective" for any president to continue promoting his country's "deliberate vulnerability" to attack. Indeed, a United States left deliberately vulnerable to missile attack will shrink from sending troops to foreign hot spots. The result will be an instinct toward isolationism and a concordant diminution of American global preeminence.

Aha! the Gore campaign counters, loosening the ABM handcuffs will spark a dangerous arms race, as Russia and China rapidly build up their nuclear arsenals in order to overwhelm American defenses. But military policy depends on political decisions, and arms races do not start of their own accord. That's why Bush was so insistent that "it is possible to build a missile defense and diffuse confrontation with Russia." If Moscow decides nuclear arms reductions are in its political interest, there can be no nuclear arms race. And Russia may so decide. After all, the recent Russian ratifications of START II and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty testify that Moscow is thinking politically about arms control. Vladimir Putin and his generals want to divert the billions of dollars saved by nuclear cutbacks into repairing Russia's rickety conventional forces.

The decision to proceed with a national missile defense must lie with the next president. Bush has shown he understands what is at stake, while Gore is floundering, still trying to apply outdated arms control concepts, flawed even 20 years ago, to a 21st century reality. ♦

Alexander Rose is a columnist at the National Post *in Canada.*

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Hating John Rocker

The reaction to the comments of the Atlanta Braves pitcher is a case study in liberal hysteria.

By Dennis Prager

It has been said that while comic books may be nonsense, the history of comic books is scholarship. That is the spirit in which to approach the John Rocker controversy. A pitcher for the Atlanta Braves baseball team, Rocker made disparaging remarks about minorities and New York City that merit as little attention as comic books. But the reaction to those comments is worthy of inspection. There is a great deal to be learned from the anti-Rocker hysteria fomented by the media.

Hysteria is the correct term. Consider what Rocker actually said. Rocker made his comments late last year to a *Sports Illustrated* reporter while driving to give a speech at a school for learning-disabled children—the media's favorite sexist, bigot, and racist may even have a kind heart. And what were the comments?

He began by spouting off at a bad driver:

"So many dumbasses don't know how to drive in this town. They turn from the wrong lane. They go 20 miles per hour. . . . Look! Look at this idiot! I guarantee you she's a Japanese woman." This bit of traffic stereotyping has led the media and Major League Baseball to label Rocker a sexist and anti-Asian.

Then America's pariah made the remarks that led to his widespread labeling as a bigot. When asked if he would ever play for a New York team, Rocker said:

"I would retire first. It's the most hectic, nerve-racking city. Imagine having to take the [Number] 7 train to the ballpark, looking like you're [riding through] Beirut next to some kid with purple hair, next to some queer with AIDS, right next to some dude who just got out of jail for the fourth time, right next to some 20-year-old mom with four kids. It's depressing.

"The biggest thing I don't like about New York are the foreigners. I'm not a very big fan of foreigners. You can walk an entire block in Times Square and not hear anybody speaking English. Asians and Koreans and Vietnamese and Indians and Russians and Spanish people and everything up there. How the hell did they get in this country?"

And why the charges of racism against Rocker? According to the reporter, "In passing, he calls an overweight black teammate 'a fat monkey.'"

Let's now summarize Rocker's comments by target:

Asians: Rocker assumes a bad driver is Japanese.

Women: Rocker assumes that a bad driver is a woman.

Gays: Rocker refers to a hypothetical subway passenger as a "queer" and associates AIDS with him.

New Yorkers: The hypothetical subway riders are a punk, a criminal, and an overly productive young mother.

Foreigners: Rocker is not a "big fan" and is uncomfortable with New York having so many people who do not speak English.

Blacks: Rocker refers to a teammate as a "fat monkey."

For these comments—which feature but one deliberately pejorative term (*queer* is inexcusable when meant derogatorily, though it is increasingly used by gays in academia and elsewhere)—made to a reporter asking about his feelings regarding New York and its fans, John Rocker's name has now been sullied more than that of any other athlete, and almost any public figure, in memory. It should be pointed out that Rocker was being interviewed in the first place because of a highly marketable

Dennis Prager is an author, theologian, and syndicated radio talk-show host based in Los Angeles. A longer version of this article appears in a forthcoming issue of his newsletter, The Prager Perspective.

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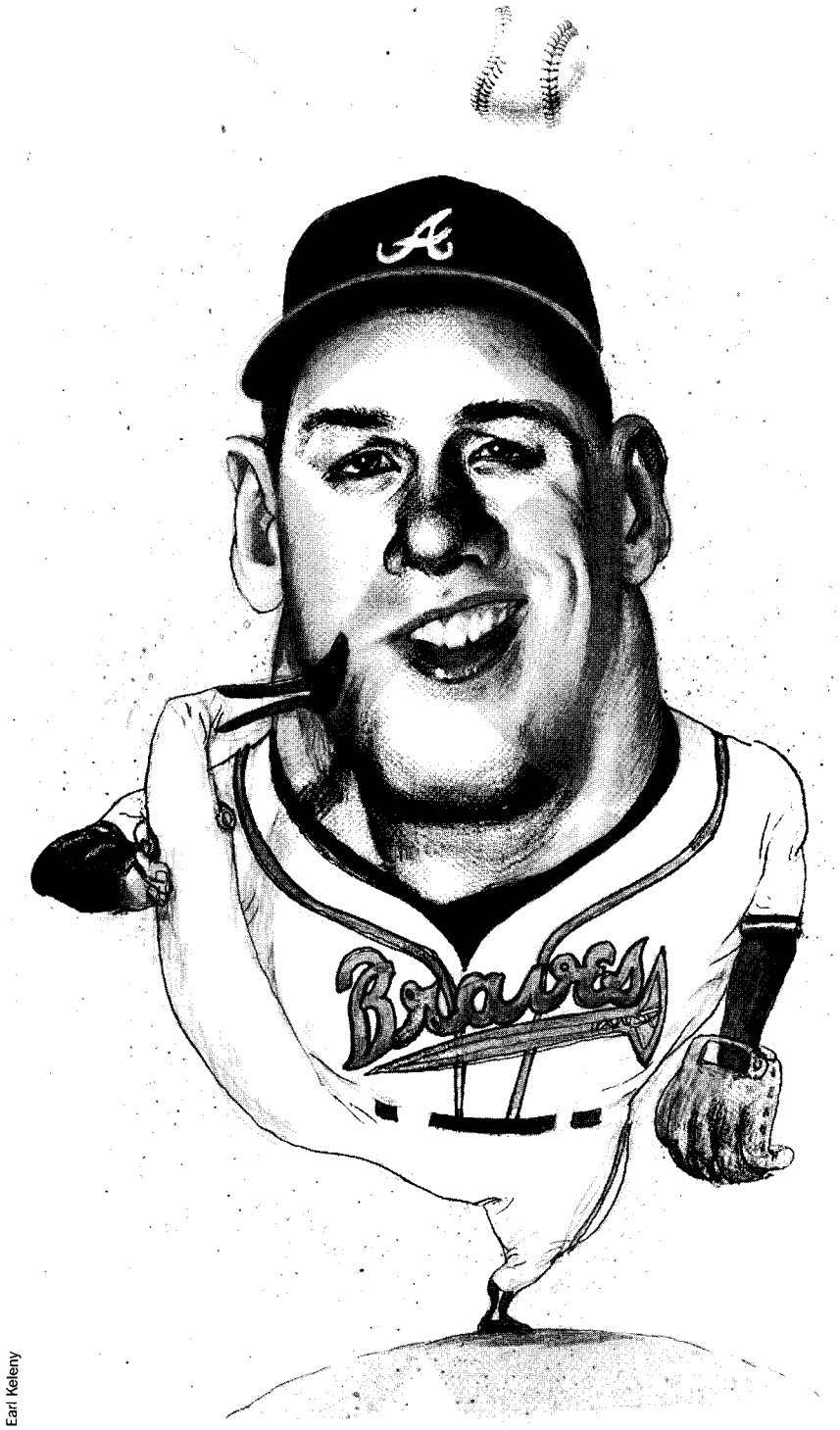

Earl Keleny

ongoing feud between the pitcher and New York baseball fans.

There is little question that a media mob set out after Rocker not for reasons of moral principle or damage to the sport but because, for all their talk against hatred, many liberals have a great deal of hate, and the liberal media frequently foment it. Had Rocker beaten his girlfriend or wife, he would have been ignored. Had he choked his coach as Latrell Sprewell, now a beloved New York Knicks player, did, he might have received a sympathetic 3,000 word profile in the *New York Times Magazine*. Had he sold heroin, he would have been punished, but no columnist or editorialist or comic would have humiliated him, no fans would have cursed him as tens of thousands recently did in Los Angeles and as packed stadiums no doubt will in New York when his team plays there at the end of June.

Certainly had Rocker chosen his ethnic targets more carefully he would have escaped media censure. If he had mocked Mormons, as former basketball player Dennis Rodman did, he might have been fined by the league, but the media would have snickered, as it did over Rodman's insults. Had he attacked Cuban-Americans, he might even have been considered a fellow liberal. The good liberal owner of the Baltimore Orioles, Peter Angelos, reportedly decided earlier this year not to hire Cubans for his team because it would upset his plans to do business with Castro. This was a policy directly comparable to that of whites-only baseball team owners who didn't hire black players until the 1950s because it would upset their racist fans. Did the media go after Angelos for this? No, he backed down only because conservative legal experts pointed out that such a discriminatory policy could violate civil rights law. Rocker, in short, has been singled out for punishment by liberal vigilantes in the media.

Here are some examples of the anti-Rocker hysteria fomented by the media:

*Jay Leno. The host of the *Tonight Show* has had guests take baseball bats and whack a John Rocker dummy. Leno remains one of America's most popular TV comedians by attacking "safe" targets. He picks on Rocker for a reason: According to the broken moral compass of liberal America, there is only one repellent act deserving of public mockery and censure, and that's when a white man (especially a southerner) says something negative

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about liberal minority groups. Other minorities, such as Cuban-Americans, Korean-Americans, Mormons, and Catholics may be ridiculed with impunity (as Catholics routinely are) and even attacked (as Koreans were in the Los Angeles riots).

*George Vecsey, chief sports columnist for the *New York Times*. In one column alone, Vecsey describes Rocker as a "bully," a "bigot," a man with "deep-seated hatred of the other," "bigotry incarnate," and "vicious." He expounds:

"It is a rather sad chore to discuss the bigotry incarnate in one relief pitcher, but John Rocker left us no choice. . . . Most of all, he hates foreigners, his definition most obviously including African-Americans."

Most obviously? This is plain dishonesty, and must reflect a desire on Vecsey's part to arouse racial animosity against Rocker. African-Americans were not even mentioned by the pitcher.

"Official Atlanta, black and white, must back far away from John Rocker and his vicious sense of disenfranchisement, which is no small factor in rural America."

So according to Vecsey, Rocker must be ostracized by all decent people. This excommunication of enemies is catching on in liberal America. San Francisco mayor Willie Brown recently called for all blacks and all black institutions to shun Justice Clarence Thomas. What's more, Vecsey feels free to generalize as disparagingly about rural America as Rocker does about New York. Except when Vecsey indulges his prejudices, it's just another day at the office; when Rocker does so he's a "muscle-twitching, wide-eyed specimen" of bigotry and hatred.

Rocker has more than apologized; he has, as his inquisitors wanted, groveled. But no matter: He is treated as America's Great Hater.

Vecsey concludes his rant: "Rocker has since issued an apology whose coherence and maturity make it impossible to have been written by him. The ghostwritten mea culpa will not work. He said it, now he has to live with it."

A characteristic view of contemporary liberalism is the importance of forgiveness—especially of violent criminals, whom we are incessantly instructed to understand rather than judge. Liberals, for instance, never remind Jesse Jackson of his references to New York as "Hymietown" or opine that his excuses for the lapse should not be credited. They believe, correctly, that the Rev. Jackson should be forgiven. But Rocker's apology "will not work." The team's owner should "just fire this rube . . . as a gesture to peace on earth."

You could with equal justice argue that, given the hysterical hate-mongering nature of this column, relieving George Vecsey of his duties would increase peace in America.

*Richard Matthews, editorialist, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. In an April 20 piece, Matthews comments: "Yes, of course [Rocker] has a right to any ideas that occur to him. So did Idi Amin." Another thoughtful analogy from our mainstream media. An editorial writer on Atlanta's major newspaper compares Rocker to one of the twentieth century's most notorious mass murderers and a cannibal.

*Lewis M. Steel, a lawyer whose specialty is defending minorities and women insulted in the workplace, writing in the *New York Times*, February 12, 2000: "What Jackie Robinson endured when he broke into baseball should not be allowed again."

Another thoughtless analogy—the terrible treatment directed by many white players at Jackie Robinson, the first black major league baseball player, and John Rocker's uncivil tongue. There is no evidence linking John Rocker to any mistreatment of any minority player in baseball (unless you count the numerous strikeouts that he metes out to batters without regard to race). But when an activist trial lawyer wants to smear, facts don't get in the way.

Steel's real goal, though, is not to smear Rocker but to further the most frightening legal innovation of contemporary liberals—using the threat of litigation to suppress freedom of speech: "John Rocker is an employee of the Atlanta Braves. His employer has not only the right but the duty to see to it that his conduct comports with federal civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination in employment on the basis of race and national origin. The Supreme Court has ruled that an employer cannot allow any of its workers to create 'a hostile work environment' based on bias."

The totalitarian impulse in contemporary liberalism is nowhere more evident than in the speech codes that blanket the American workplace. Here is a lawyer writing in the *New York Times* that John Rocker has created a "hostile work environment" for all the non-whites in baseball. "Besides making remarks insulting to his fellow employees, Rocker insulted his employer's customers—the fans of Major League Baseball. Not only is letting an employee behave this way to customers likely to be bad for business, but it may well violate the public accommodations provisions of the federal civil rights laws. Permitting players to trumpet their racism publicly is just another way of telling certain fans they are not welcome in major league ballparks."

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In this paragraph we have two examples of liberal incitement to hate. One is the cavalier use of the word "racism," which serves only to increase racial tension in America. The other is the pronouncement that Rocker insulted "the fans of Major League Baseball." This is a lawyer's clear invitation published in the *New York Times* for baseball fans to abuse Rocker. Needless to add, Steel, like all of Rocker's critics, was missing in action earlier this month when baseball faced its only real civil rights threat in recent memory—the aborted policy of his fellow trial lawyer, Baltimore Orioles' owner Peter Angelos, to discriminate on the basis of national origin against Cuban players.

*Bill Plaschke, sports columnist, *Los Angeles Times*. Of all the ugly hate-filled anti-Rocker rhetoric, a May 2 column by the chief sports columnist of the *Los Angeles Times* stands out as the most irresponsible. Until Plaschke, no one had celebrated hate-filled *behavior* against the Braves pitcher.

On the night of May 1, the Atlanta Braves came to Los Angeles to play the Dodgers. When John Rocker entered the game in the ninth inning, as Plaschke told it, "Dodger Stadium erupted in chair-shaking boos filled with a venom rarely heard in these placid parts. By the time he reached the mound, he had been pelted with cups and trash thrown with such furiousness that the public-address announcer was quickly and heartily threatening arrests.

"The boos stayed strong with every pitch. The debris disappeared, but then fans in the stands began throwing words and shoves, emotions spilling over like ninth-inning beer.

"Then, finally, with a 1-and-1 count on Kevin Elster and a man on first base, a fan spoke for everyone.

"He ran onto the field.

"He turned his back on the man who turned his back on us.

"And he mooned him.

"Forcing Rocker, perhaps, to see the world as the world sees him."

The lead sports columnist for one of America's major newspapers sees a man expose himself in front of tens of thousands of men, women, and children *and the columnist lauds it*.

Plaschke cited with approval all the hate-filled speech screamed at Rocker:

"John Rocker, you racist pig!"

"Rocker, you're ugly!"

"Rocker, you can autograph my toilet paper!"

"Hey Rocker, are you as dumb as you look?"

To Plaschke, all this and the mooning was evidence that "a city's conscience broke out."

The abuse heaped upon Rocker needs to be explained, for three reasons.

First, Rocker's comments themselves, while foolish and insulting, are only that—foolish and insulting. They are not evil; and they are not necessarily racist. While driving, I have probably thought something awful about every miserable driver who had any identifiable trait—religious ("God, are nuns lousy drivers"), ethnic ("Another slow driving Asian"), sex ("Of course he's speeding, he's a young male"), dress ("Maybe if you grew up and didn't wear your hat backwards, you'd know how to drive!"), class ("White trash"), and many more, including derogatory thoughts about my own religious/ethnic group ("Doesn't a guy wearing a yarmulke know not to act that way on the road?"). I don't think I am exceptional in this regard. Anyone who declares such thoughts to be manifestations of dangerous racism is a self-deluding fool. Anathematizing trivial behavioral tics that are universally engaged in is more dangerous to the cause of combating racism than John Rocker.

The second reason the hate-filled reactions to Rocker's comments need explanation is that Rocker is, after all, nothing but *a pitcher on a baseball team*. The thoughts of a baseball player on immigrants, Asian women drivers, and New York subway passengers are of little importance to society. Rocker's opinions might be deemed more significant if he went around America saying these things in public speeches. But he doesn't. Instead he gives, apparently, motivational talks to disabled kids. He has confined his negative thoughts to one interview with a sports reporter with whom he drove through Atlanta while answering questions about New York City, whose fans had treated him despicably before these comments were made.

The third reason the intense reactions need explanation is that John Rocker has profusely apologized. In fact, both verbally and in writing he has more than apologized; he has, as his inquisitors wanted, groveled, and shown, in ways reminiscent of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, that he has been reeducated. But no matter: He remains the butt of media jokes and continues to be treated as America's Great Hater.

How to explain the anomaly of such intense hatred directed at a baseball player who made intemperate comments to a reporter and who has been punished (Major League Baseball suspended him for several games at the beginning of the season) and apologized? Especially when other athletes have done so much worse?

The answer tells us a lot about contemporary liberalism, and especially about the liberal media.

Most obviously, liberals who devote great energy to "combating hate" need to look inward. If there were a

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meter to measure hateful public speech in America, the needle would surely spend more time pointed left than right.

Yes, the Clintons have attracted their share of haters on the right. But they are dwarfed in numbers and influence by the liberals whose relentless barrage of loathing and contempt pours down on out-of-favor groups and individuals. There *is* such a thing as a politics of personal destruction in America. John Rocker has been its perfect victim. The wild overreaction, the hysteria, the media incitement to hatred—over trivia uttered by a trivial personality—is an astonishing spectacle.

Think of these terms—"racist," "bigot," "sexist," "chauvinist," "homophobe"—and think how often you have heard them hurled at a person with whom a liberal disagreed. Think how often the terms are used unfairly. Think how often they are used instead of debate. Can you now list the comparable pejorative, dismissive, hate-filled terms in common use by conservatives? There is no such list.

An unforgivable sin of modern liberalism has been to cheapen terms like "bigot" to the point that decent Americans yawn at the accusation.

In fairness, it should be recorded that a few members of the media have pointedly refused to join the anti-Rocker mob.

Here is John Leo, *U.S. News*'s indefatigable crusader against political correctness: "Traditionally, society has been concerned with the behavior of its members, not their thoughts. As long as you do not violate the rights of others, you can think what you like. Your mind may be saintly or aboil with wild prejudices. But your thoughts are yours alone, not to be refurbished under pressure by government, employers or anybody's trainers.

"There are problems in punishing speech when you hardly ever punish action. [Major League Baseball commissioner Bud] Selig didn't suspend the Colorado Rockies pitcher who recently pleaded guilty to beating his wife, or the Arizona Diamondbacks reliever charged with smacking his wife around as their young child watched."

And here is Lance Morrow, writing in *Time*'s Internet edition: "There is no more deserving target [than New York fans]. Anyone who knows New York baseball fans, especially Yankee fans, knows they include some of the most loathsome characters on earth. When is Selig going to suspend *them* from baseball? I stopped going to Yankee games years ago because invariably, toward the end of the sixth inning, the morons in the upper deck would be drunk again, and dumping beer on those below, and spewing a violent, concussive line of filth (directed at players on the field—especially if they belonged to the Boston Red Sox—or at their neighbors in the stands). That is the way they root, root, root for the home team out in the Bronx. During the World Series, these animals threw flashlight batteries at John Rocker on the field.

"Long ago, in another country, there was a noble American cliché: I don't agree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it. No intelligent person would defend what Rocker said. But every intelligent person should defend the principle that Rocker can say what he damn well wants. First you censure people for what they say, then you censure them for what they think or feel. Eventually they pre-edit what they say and think and even feel. Then we all live harmoniously, under the rule of a coercive pietism."

But the Leos and Morrows are few and far between. They are honorable exceptions to the media rule, which is a noisy, angry, morally confused liberalism.

The reaction to John Rocker is another reminder that liberal hysteria diminishes the struggle against racism. An unforgivable sin of modern liberalism has been to cheapen terms like "racist" and "bigot" to the point that most decent Americans now yawn at the accusation.

Worse still, the news media, which are overwhelmingly liberal, now actively foment race hatred in the guise of combating it. Media coverage of real and alleged white racism often verges on the hysterical. The most prominent example was the tape of white police officers beating Rodney King. American television news programs endlessly showed (a highly selective part of) the tape, and skewed all reporting toward one end—enraging black Americans. How else to explain the almost universal description of Rodney King as nothing more than "a black motorist." His leading police on a long and life-endangering chase was rarely reported, nor was his criminal record, nor was the fact that his black companion in the car wasn't touched.

Seeing and hearing frenzied, hate-filled mobs—as I did in Los Angeles and as we will in New York—inevitably makes me think about what mobs have done at other times in other places. That these mobs are created in large part by a hysterical elite and its media only adds to my worry. Clearly, angry people with a broken moral compass and a great deal of hate are setting much of this nation's agenda. ◆

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The Real Gulf War Blunder

The problem wasn't that Barry McCaffrey kept on fighting—it was that we stopped fighting too soon.

By Mackubin Thomas Owens

Seymour Hersh's allegation in the May 22 *New Yorker* that then-Major General Barry McCaffrey unleashed his 24th Infantry Division in an unnecessary attack that mercilessly pummeled retreating Iraqi soldiers two days after the Gulf War cease-fire in 1991 has created the usual furor. Even though the U.S. Army investigated the charges against Gen. McCaffrey years ago, the *New York Times* has called for an independent review, claiming that "the military services have a poor record of holding their own members accountable for misconduct, especially top officers."

On one level, the Hersh-McCaffrey contretemps is much ado about nothing. As the Clintons and their spinners would say, it is old news. But if we can get past the typical press treatment of the issue as a clash of stereotypes, the "'no-holds-barred' investigative reporter vs. the ambitious 'hard-charging' general," the story reveals some important truths about the nature of war and the difficulties of waging it in a democratic republic.

The basic facts are these. On March 2, 1991, two days after the Gulf War cease-fire, elements of the 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized) trapped an Iraqi column that had blundered into it near Rumaila, about 50 miles south of Al Qurnah on the Euphrates River. In an intense but one-sided fight, the division destroyed 346 Iraqi armored vehicles including 30 T-72 tanks. McCaffrey's critics claim that he provoked the fight and then used force far in excess of what was necessary. McCaffrey and his defenders reply that it was the Iraqis who provoked the clash and that the response of the 24th Infantry Division was fully in accordance with existing cease-fire guidelines.

To understand McCaffrey's actions at Rumaila, it is necessary to grasp the fact that the foremost military objective of the ground war was the destruction of the three divisions of Saddam's Republican Guard. The plan for the Allied ground attack called for the Marines and other Allied forces to fix the Iraqi forces south of Kuwait City while the VII and XVIII Airborne Corps executed a *Kesselschlacht*, a strategic envelopment from the west toward Basra. The purpose of this maneuver was to trap the main Iraqi forces, especially the Republican Guard, before they could escape across the Euphrates.

But the Marine attack was too successful. The offensive against Kuwait City drove the Iraqis out of their defenses rather than fixing them in place. The attack of the VII Corps, on the other hand, took too long to develop. Still, bold action on the part of two divisions of the XVIII Airborne Corps, McCaffrey's 24th Division and the 101st Air Assault Division, placed them in position to prevent the escape of many Republican Guard units.

That is the background for the situation Gen. McCaffrey found himself in on March 2. But the blame for the events of that day, if any blame is to be assigned, belongs to McCaffrey's superiors.

On February 28, General Colin Powell, then-chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, without any clear sense of the disposition of Iraqi and American forces along the Euphrates, suddenly advised President Bush that it was appropriate to announce a cease-fire. Why? There were two reasons, neither of them sound.

Powell's principal motivation for suddenly terminating the war was to dispel the impression, created by news reports describing air attacks on retreating Iraqis along the so-called highway of death, that Allied forces were "piling on." The second reason, which is almost too embarrassing to mention, was that Powell and other Bush advisers believed it would be nice to end the war after 100 hours. One hundred seemed a good round number for the history books.

Powell did not bother to inform either the president or the secretary of defense that the central military mis-

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sion—destruction of the Republican Guard—had not yet been accomplished. Given that this was the primary military objective of the ground offensive, this was a rather startling omission on Powell's part. After all, the political goals of the war as laid down by President Bush and the other coalition leaders—the expulsion of the Iraqis from Kuwait and the destruction of Saddam Hussein's power base in Iraq—required the destruction of the Republican Guard, upon which Saddam's power was thought to rest. When they made the decision to call the cease-fire, President Bush and Secretary Cheney were under the misapprehension that this publicly announced goal had indeed been achieved.

Powell's hasty decision to call a cease-fire before American forces had completed their mission was bound to create confusion and ambiguity for U.S. field commanders, who right up until the moment they heard of the cease-fire were scrambling to accomplish their assigned task. On February 28, U.S. forces, including McCaffrey's division, were poised to "close the gate" on the Republican Guard. They were startled, and angered, when the order came to halt the ground war. To those on the front lines, like McCaffrey, the order seemed disastrously premature, driven not by politico-military considerations—the objective of destroying the Republican Guard—but by Powell's public relations concerns. In fact, President Bush had originally planned to allow his theater commander, General Norman Schwarzkopf, to determine the timing of the war's end, on the sensible assumption that Gen. Schwarzkopf would be in the best position to judge when the military mission had been accomplished. Powell's short-circuiting of this process was a profound error.

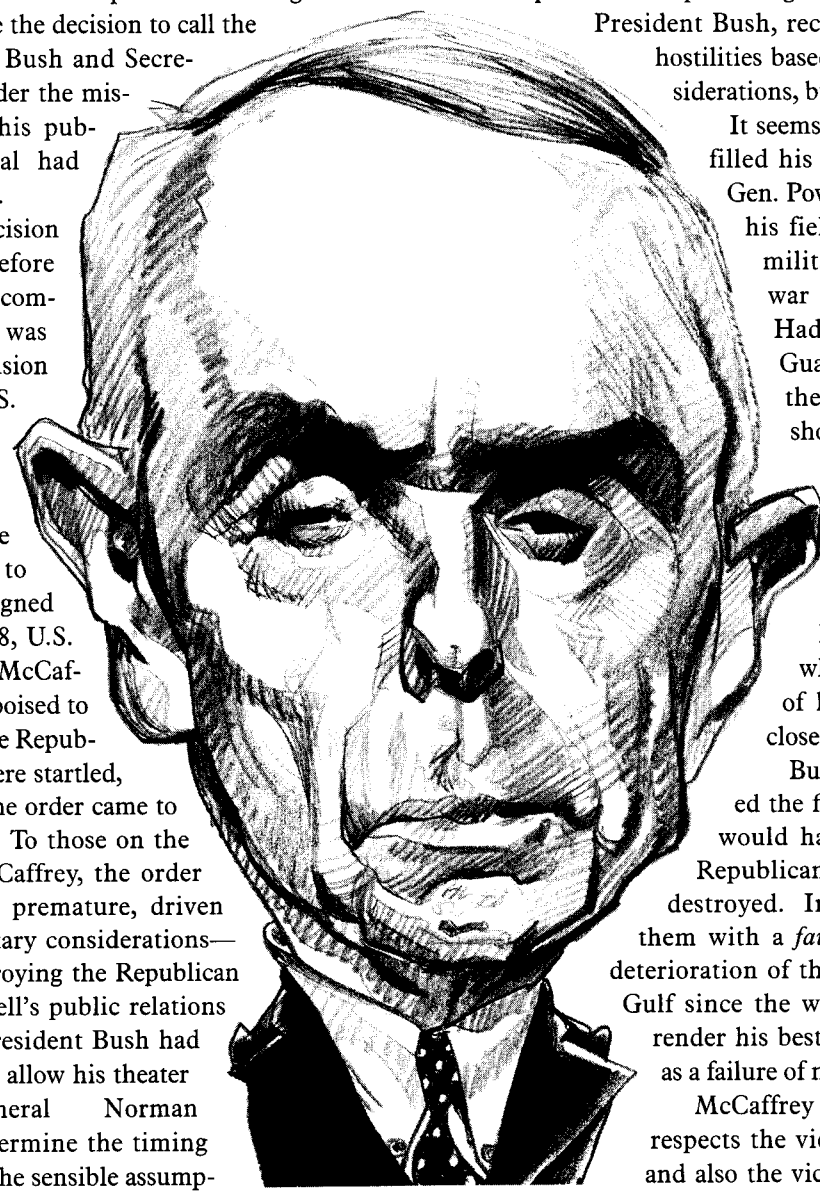
No soldier denies that in the American system of government, political considerations trump military ones. Nor do soldiers doubt that the civilian leadership has the authority under the Constitution to make decisions regarding war and peace. Indeed, the idea that once the fighting begins, the politicians stand aside and let the generals take the lead is at odds not only with American republican theory of government, but also with Clausewitz's subordination of war to policy.

But by law, the military leadership is obligated to provide the civil authorities with the best possible military advice. The record indicates that Gen. Powell, who was responsible for providing this military advice to President Bush, recommended an end to hostilities based not on military considerations, but on political ones.

It seems clear that to have fulfilled his statutory obligations, Gen. Powell should have asked his field commanders if the military objective of the war had been achieved: Had the Republican Guard been destroyed? If the answer was no, he should have recommended that the ground war continue. Had the president rejected his advice, Powell still would have done his duty while reflecting the view of his field commanders closest to the action.

But Powell never consulted the field commanders, who would have told him that the Republican Guard had not been destroyed. Instead, he presented them with a *fait accompli*. Given the deterioration of the U.S. position in the Gulf since the war, Powell's failure to render his best military advice ranks as a failure of major proportions.

McCaffrey was in important respects the victim of Powell's error, and also the victim of the usual problems of warfare: bad information, bad luck, what Clausewitz called the "fog of uncertainty" in war, and that ineffable but often decisive factor, "friction." Once the cease-fire had been called, one of McCaffrey's goals was to prevent the defeated Iraqis from returning to recover the weapons and equipment they had abandoned and to ensure that they did not position artillery where it could threaten U.S. forces. McCaf-



Gen. Barry McCaffrey

Illustration by Thomas Fluharty

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frey interpreted the cease-fire liberally: The shooting was to stop, but American units were not precluded from moving around. (Other American commanders, especially in the neighboring VII Corps, did not believe additional movement was authorized once the cease-fire went into effect.) Adding to the confusion, McCaffrey did not know that the Hammar causeway, leading from Rumaila north to the Euphrates, was one of the escape routes the Iraqis might choose. He thought the causeway had been destroyed by allied air attacks.

Iraqi forces were even more in the dark about the disposition of American troops. They simply blundered into McCaffrey's division astride the Hammar causeway. In a perfect world characterized by perfect information, the clash at Rumaila would have been avoided, or at least stopped soon after it broke out. But friction and uncertainty conspire to ensure that commanders rarely operate in such an environment. Looking back with twenty-twenty hindsight, McCaffrey acknowledged after the war that the Iraqis were probably not looking for a fight. They "either did not know we were there or thought they could drive through us under terms of the cease-fire agreement." But when the Rumaila fight erupted, Iraqi intentions were unclear.

In the confusion of a clash such as that at Rumaila, any commander worth his salt errs on the side of "too much" force.

In the confusion of a clash such as that at Rumaila, any commander worth his salt errs on the side of "too much" force rather than too little. At the tactical and operational level of war, military necessity trumps proportionality every time.

McCaffrey's actions at Rumaila on March 2, 1991, must be examined in light of what he and other commanders thought at the time, not what we know now in retrospect. This means remembering that our perceptions of the Iraqi army were far different in 1990-91 from what they are today.

As the United States assembled a coalition and built up forces in the wake of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, there was great trepidation. No one doubted that a U.S.-led coalition would prevail eventually, but many believed the cost would be high. After all, the Iraqi army had acquitted itself well during an eight-year war with Iran.

Against the Iranians, the Iraqi army had perfected defensive tactics that were responsible for inflicting massive casualties on the attackers. Employing extensive minefields and other obstacles, the Iraqis lured Iranian formations into killing zones where they destroyed them with massed artillery fires and armored counterattacks. Finally, in April 1988, the Iraqis launched their *Tawakalna Ala Allah* offensive, a masterful campaign which, in five major battles over four months, drove the Iranians off the Al Fao peninsula. This campaign is still considered by some to be a masterpiece of operational art.

The pessimism that prevailed in 1990 was reflected in the views of many highly respected defense analysts. For example, Edward Luttwak predicted that the Iraqis would force the United States into the sort of war of attrition the Iraqis had fought against the Iranians and that the high-tech U.S. military would bog down in the desert. Additionally, there was great concern that Iraq would use chemical weapons against the United States and its allies.

At the foundation of Hersh's journalistic attack on McCaffrey, then, is a fundamental neglect of the way things looked at the time. Based on the record of the Iran-Iraq War, American leaders, both civilian and military, expected that the Iraqis would put up a stiff resistance. The intention of U.S. military commanders was to knock the Iraqis down and not permit them to get up. The last thing we wanted was a "fair fight." It is a lot easier in hindsight to say that Gen. McCaffrey should have had less trepidation and more sympathy when confronting an Iraqi force of uncertain intentions.

The McCaffrey affair calls to mind a passage from Field Marshall Sir William Slim's charming memoir of the inter-war period, *Unofficial History*. "The soldier," wrote Slim,

> always knows that everything he does . . . will be scrutinized by two classes of critics—by the Government which employs him and by the enemies of that Government. As far as the Government is concerned, he is a little Admiral Jellicoe and this his tiny battle of Jutland. He has to make a vital decision on incomplete information in a matter of seconds, and afterwards the experts can sit down at leisure, with all the facts before them, and argue about what he might, could, or should have done. Lucky the soldier if, as in Jellicoe's case, the tactical experts decide after twenty years' profound consideration that what he did in three minutes was right. As for the enemies of the Government, it does not much matter what he has done. They will twist, misinterpret, falsify, or invent any fact as evidence that he is an inhuman monster wallowing in innocent blood.

McCaffrey is surely the victim of this latter kind of scrutiny. And the tragic irony is that the true blunderers at the end of the Gulf War, the ones who produced both the confusion that trapped McCaffrey and the entirely unsatisfactory conclusion of the war, will continue to be unacknowledged. ♦

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Arabian Fables (II)

More fanciful Arab myths to sway world opinion.

Earlier this year, we published our message, "Arabian Fables (I)", in which we made clear how the Arab propaganda machine creates myths and lies with which to misinform the world. We discussed the myths of the "Palestinians" and of the "West Bank" and the mythical concept of "occupied territories". In today's message, we shall address three more of these myths.

What are some of these myths?

Jerusalem ("Arab East Jerusalem"). The Arabs have assiduously propagated the myths that Jerusalem is an Arab capital, that (after Mecca and Medina) Jerusalem is their third holy city, and that it is intolerable to them that infidels (Jews) are in possession of it.

The reality of course is that Jerusalem was never an Arab capital and that it was, until the Jews revitalized it, a dusty provincial city that hardly played any economic, social, or political role. Jerusalem is mentioned hundreds of times in the Jewish Bible and has been the center of the Jewish faith and the focus of Jewish longing ever since the Romans destroyed the Temple in the early years of the first millenium. Not once is Jerusalem mentioned in the Koran.

As to "East Jerusalem": There is East Saint Louis, there is East Hampton, and there used to be East Berlin, but, until the Arab propaganda machine created the concept, there was never in history an "East Jerusalem", let alone an "Arab East Jerusalem".

The eastern part of Jerusalem is now predominantly inhabited by Arabs, though their proportion is decreasing. But what is the reason for this? It is because the Jordanians destroyed all traces of Jewish presence from the eastern part of the city and drove all the Jews out during the 19 years (between 1948 and 1967) in which they were in occupation of the eastern part of the city. The world, informed by Arab propaganda, considers those Jews who wish to return to the eastern part of the city to be troublemakers or worse.

The concept of Jerusalem being a holy Arab city and the capital of whatever political entity the "Palestinians" may eventually form is a myth and so of course is the concept of "Arab East Jerusalem".

"Settlements". When Jordan came into possession of Judea/Samaria and the eastern part of Jerusalem, following the invasion of the newly-formed Jewish state, and stayed in occupation for 19 years, it systematically obliterated all Jewish villages in the area under their occupation, drove out the Jewish inhabitants, and left the area "judenrein" (free of Jews) – the first time that concept had been applied since the Nazis created it during their short and bloody reign in Germany. When the Israelis recovered these territories, they rebuilt these villages, created new ones, and built new towns and suburbs to existing cities, especially Jerusalem.

The Arabs decided to call these towns and villages "settlements", with their connotation of illegitimacy and impermanence. The world, including the United States, is much agitated over these population centers and, goaded by the Arabs, declares them to be impediments to peace. What nonsense! Nobody considers the tens of thousands of Arabs who continue to stream to these territories as impediments to peace.

The term "settlements", too, is a propaganda myth created by the Arabs.

> "The Arab propaganda machine has created myths that have been accepted by much of the world. No peace in the Middle East is possible until those Arab myths have been exposed for what they are!"

"Refugees". In 1948, when six Arab armies invaded the Jewish state in order to destroy it on the very day of its birth, broadcasts by the advancing Arab armies appealed to the resident Arabs to leave their homes so as not to be in the way of the invaders. As soon as the "quick victory" was won, they could return to their homes and would also enjoy the loot from the Jews, who would have been driven into the sea. It didn't turn out quite that way. Those Arabs who, despite the urgings of the Jews to stay and to remain calm, foolishly left, became refugees. Those who decided not to yield to those blandishments are now, and have been for over 50 years, citizens of Israel, with all the same rights and privileges as their Jewish fellows.

But what happened to those refugees – by best estimates about 600,000 of them? Did their "Arab brethren" allow them to settle in their countries, to work, and to become productive citizens and useful members of their societies? No! They kept and still keep them, their children, their grandchildren, and in some cases even their great-grandchildren, in miserable "refugee camps", so that they can be used as political and military pawns in order to keep the burning hatred against Israel alive and in order to supply the manpower for the unremitting fight against Israel.

During those more than fifty years, Israel has taken in more than three million Jewish immigrants from all parts of the world and has integrated them productively into its society. According to the "Palestinians", the Arab "refugees" have now marvelously increased to five million(!). It is the intent and fervent desire of the Arabs that all of them should return to Israel so as to destroy the country without the necessity of war.

The "refugees" are a red herring and another myth created by the Arab propaganda machine.

The Arab propaganda machine, aided by the most high-powered public relations firms in the United States and all over, has created myths that, by dint of constant repetition, have been accepted as truth by much of the world. No sensible discussion, no peace in the Middle East, is possible until those Arab myths have been exposed for what they are.

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Right at Last

Harry Stein sees the light

By Andrew Ferguson

Man struggling in net, from Francesco Queirolo's *Disillusion* (1757). CORBIS.

Harry Stein was mortified when his wife bought a copy of *Commentary* magazine several years ago—not only bought the thing but actually had the nerve to bring it into the house. Good god: What if the neighbors saw it sitting on the coffee table?

Stein is a successful journalist and novelist, best known in those days as the author of *Esquire* magazine's "Ethics" column. Which is to say that by the very nature of things he was a conventional liberal, in political and other matters, and so were all his friends. His parents had been Communist activists in the 1930s who, this being America, went on to make a nice living and rear their children in suburban affluence. In college, during the 1960s, he had done the usual stuff: marched fiercely against bad things, ferociously demanded good things, tried to provoke school administrators who wouldn't have expelled him in a million years, lampooned Republicans without mercy in the pages of alternative newspapers, and eventually fell in love and married a woman who predictably enough was a charter member of a club called "Women Against Right-wing Scum."

And now here was his wife, a few short years and a couple of childbirths later, reading *Commentary*—whose editor Norman Podhoretz, Stein writes, "was as despised in my longtime circle as Jesse Helms," which is saying a mouthful. So he put his foot down. "I don't want this around here," he told his wife. "I don't want it around the kids." Then, like a moron, he actually read it—and discovered that he kind of almost agreed with it, sort of. "It was a lot closer to where I was on all sorts of things than the [magazines] I thought were on my side, including some I wrote for." His wife had long since quit her club, by the way. "When the group formed, I thought I was a fighter against right-wing scum," she said. "By the time I left, I was well on my way to *being* right-wing scum." Harry was close behind her.

How I Accidentally Joined the Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy (And Found Inner Peace)
by Harry Stein
Delacorte, 274 pp., $23.95

The descent into scumdom is a slippery slope, as Stein notes in his charming new memoir, *How I Accidentally Joined the Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy (And Found Inner Peace)*. "Trust me," he writes, "once you start, the process of seriously rethinking things takes on a life of its own." His fellow converts from the pre-fab liberalism of their youth will know what he means. One day you get an inkling that maybe affirmative action isn't very fair; the next thing you know, you're joining the NRA, even though you hate guns. It's not always so quick, of course. Reading *Commentary* was only one of several crucial moments that marked Harry Stein's conversion, spaced over the span of many years. Like the good conservative he now is, he blames it all on a woman—his wife Priscilla, specifically, for introducing him to the pleasures and rigors of family life.

A few days after his first child was born, as Stein tells the story, Priscilla announced she would not be returning to her glamorous job as East Coast representative of a movie studio. Stein thought it had something to do with hormones unloosed in childbirth; surely she'd sober up quickly enough and

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return to living the feminist ideal. "Instead," he writes, "it was soon clear she was getting more satisfaction in an hour with our child in our tiny Upper West Side apartment than she had in all her time over at Columbia's imposing office on Fifth Avenue." Friends were shocked. "You guys are like an *old-fashioned* family," one journalist pal told him in disgust.

The heterodoxy began to spill over into Harry's work. For a special *Esquire* issue on women, he wrote a story questioning the wholesomeness of day care. This was in the early 1980s, and he received an avalanche of personal and professional denunciations. Rather than clamber back up the slope, however, he kept going. There was a story on the "groupthink" of Reagan-era liberals for the *New York Times Magazine*, and another, for *TV Guide*, criticizing (from the wrong side) network television's hysterical coverage of AIDS. At a dinner party one night he made the mistake of mildly defending Dan Quayle's infamous Murphy Brown speech.

"When did you become a *fascist*?!" cried one of the other guests (yet another journalist).

> For a few moments after the jerk's onslaught, I was reeling. But then I realized I was far from defenseless, having a lifetime's worth of my own moral superiority to fall back on—which is to say, a nearly inexhaustible supply of slingable bulls—t. . . .
>
> I long ago mastered the tone: not so much hurt as deeply, deeply disappointed.
>
> "*That's* how you argue?" I asked quietly. "By calling me *names*?"
>
> Already a couple of other heads were starting to bob slightly. I shook my own sorrowfully, and moved in for the kill. "My God, is that *really* how you respond to someone else's ideas?"

He can still argue like a liberal, in other words. And in truth Stein is made uncomfortable by some of his new ideological bedfellows—the "religious right," for example, whom he says he once considered "a bunch of crazed zealots out to impose their repressive, intolerant theocratic values on the rest of us." Today his view is more nuanced. Since his conversion he has come to see the religious right as "a bunch of crazed zealots who pretty much kept to themselves until 'progressive' zealots started imposing *their* values on them and theirs via popular culture and the schools."

How I Accidentally Joined the Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy is only partly a memoir; large stretches of it are devoted to pure polemic, with varying degrees of success. He is excellent on the French (he can't stand them) and offers the only plausible explanation I've seen for the enduring cultural mystery of why they're so crazy for Jerry Lewis. He is also very good on the new *New York Times* (he can't stand it, either). But his arguments against multiculturalism, radical feminism, political correctness, and so on, while well-informed and snappily put, will be familiar to anyone who reads the conservative press.

Stein is a skilled writer of the breezy school, as successful contributors to the slick magazines often are. The pace of his book is relentlessly brisk. Its tone is casual, now and then veering dangerously close to chipper. For my taste, too many sentences begin with "Absolutely," or "No question." He is occasionally platitudinous, and self-righteous once in a while, too—the twin vices of polemicists everywhere. About the reluctance of some feminists to debate fundamental questions, for example, he writes: "That is not how we're supposed to do things in this country—our republic was born in a riot of fierce argument over contending philosophies and those debates have served us admirably ever since."

But I'm reluctant to complain. Quibbles like these miss the point of what is otherwise a funny, engaging, and heartfelt book. *How I Accidentally Joined the Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy* isn't the present to give friends who have been marinating for years in political discussion. It's not the gift to give your pal who's just finished his dissertation on Oakeshott's epistemology. It is the perfect gift for "leaners"—almost-former liberals, not-quite-yet conservatives, relatively apolitical people made vaguely uncomfortable by the coarseness of popular culture, or the silliness of their kids' schools, or the sanctimonious amorality of Clintonian politics. They will find in Harry Stein a man who speaks their language, a thoughtful and good-natured guide beckoning them happily down the slippery slope. ♦

Still Marching

The institutionalizing of the 1960s.

BY ADAM WOLFSON

We are a country without a sense of history. This becomes obvious every time some group issues a survey showing that American students don't know, say, when the Civil War was fought or when the Great Depression occurred. But it's not just a lack of factual knowledge that plagues us. We are so preoccupied with the present, or really the future, that we don't realize the extent to which our fates are governed by the men and movements that have preceded us.

Adam Wolfson is executive editor of the Public Interest.

The great contribution of Roger Kimball's important new book, *The Long March: How the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s Changed America*, will be to remind a generation of Americans who would not know Beat poet Allen Ginsberg from Monica Lewinsky's lawyer William Ginsburg, or Black Panther Eldridge Cleaver from *Leave It to Beaver*'s Wally Cleaver, or orgasm-prophet Wilhelm Reich from former Clinton adviser Robert Reich, that their lives have been indelibly marked by these long since forgotten countercultural icons—and not for the better. Kimball is perhaps most widely known for his earlier book *Tenured Radicals*, a

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broadside against the radical Left for hijacking the nation's universities. But readers of the *New Criterion*, of which he is managing editor, know him best for his always intelligent and elegantly crafted essays on the arts, culture, and philosophy.

The "long march" of Kimball's title refers to the radical Left's takeover of the most important institutions in American society over the last half century. If it had been a *political* revolution, the young radicals would have stormed the gates, sharpened the guillotine, and built wholly new institutions. But, as Kimball explains, in the *cultural* revolution America experienced in the 1960s, the radicals worked principally from within.

The universities, the media, the churches, the courts—the hated "Establishment"—were turned into a Countercultural Establishment. As Beat poet Ginsberg predicted, the revolution worked through the children. The effect is all the more insidious and complete because it is unseen and leaves few traces. There are no burned capital buildings to give witness to the revolution that took place. Many on the left even deny that such a revolution in mores and values occurred, accusing conservatives of making up the "culture wars" for partisan advantage.

Kimball sets the record straight, however, reconstructing the goals and methods of the first generation of culture warriors. He includes chapters on the Beats (including Jack Kerouac and William S. Burroughs), Norman Mailer, Susan Sontag, Herbert Marcuse, and others, along with insightful discussions of some of the formative events of the 1960s, such as Woodstock, the student rebellions at Cornell and Yale, the Vietnam War, and the founding of the *New York Review of Books*. It's not a comprehensive history of the 1960s but, as he puts it, a tour of "the founding documents and personalities of America's cultural revolution."

Since these founders took the first steps in the long march that was to follow, they were necessarily bolder in their statements and more self-conscious about what needed to be done. For them, unlike the unknowing generations to follow, there really was an establishment to be destroyed. And thus, Kimball implies, it is only by returning to their pronouncements and the sensibility they sought to inculcate that we can understand our benighted present.

And what a twisted sensibility it was! The bulk of Kimball's book is devoted to documenting, in explicit detail, what the radicals said and did. There was the

Jack Moebes / CORBIS

The Long March
How the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s Changed America
by Roger Kimball
Encounter, 250 pp., $23.95

revered Burroughs on sex: "A horde of lust-mad American women rush in. Dripping c—ts. . . . They scream and yipe and howl, leap on the guests like bitch dogs in heat with rabies." There was Sontag on America—"a criminal, sinister country"—and Jerry Rubin on the finer points of America's foreign policy: "Puritanism leads us to Vietnam. Sexual insecurity results in a supermasculinity trip called imperialism."

There was Cleaver's celebration of rape as "an insurrectionary act" and Andrew Kopkind's sacralization of revolutionary violence: "Morality, like politics, starts at the barrel of a gun." There was Charles Reich on the coming utopia—"It promises a higher reason, a more human community, and a new and liberated individual"—and, of course, Timothy Leary's "Turn on, tune in, drop out."

There is a tendency, no doubt, to dismiss the sentiments and arguments and antics of the counterculture as having nothing to do with us today. Kimball is aware of the danger of forgetfulness and denial. He frequently warns the reader not to think of the 1960s as some "bygone era" and its Founding Fathers as mere museum pieces, cranks, or period figures.

The ideology of the 1960s, Kimball contends,

> has insinuated itself, disastrously, into the curricula of our schools and colleges; it has significantly altered the texture of sexual relations and family life; it has played havoc with the authority of churches and other repositories of moral wisdom; it has undermined the claims of civic virtue and our national self-understanding; it has degraded the media, the entertainment industry, and popular culture; it has helped to subvert museums and other institutions entrusted with preserving and transmitting high culture. It has even, most poignantly, addled our hearts and innermost assumptions about what counts as the good life: It has perverted our dreams as much as it has prevented us from attaining them.

Faced by this calamity, what is a conservative to do? In Kimball's view, the task is not to understand why the 1960s struck. He has little patience with arguments about causes, which he believes are endless and, worse, a distraction. According to Kimball, "the real task for a cultural critic is not etiological . . . but diagnostic and, ultimately, therapeutic."

Though Kimball does not define what he means by therapy (usually frowned on by conservatives), I believe his book is itself intended as a sort of therapy. Or really shock therapy. Kimball perhaps wants to shake us out of our complacency and universal tolerance by confronting us with what he takes to be the "real origins" of the 1960s—its early "prophets of Dionysian excess." He wishes us to see ourselves in the mad ravings of Sontag, Cleaver, and Burroughs.

It is here that I think Kimball-as-therapist falters. Kimball chooses to emphasize the cranks like Mailer and

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Ginsberg rather than what he acknowledges to be the true grandfathers and fathers of the 1960s: Rousseau, Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud. But it is only by considering these thinkers (especially the former two) that one can begin to grasp the genuine shortcomings of bourgeois societies and their vulnerabilities to cultural revolution.

It is not a point, I believe, Kimball would object to. As he repeatedly notes, the Beats, Mailer, and the rest were second- and third-rate artists at best. None were serious thinkers. It is in truth hard to credit any of them as the "real origins" of the 1960s. Indeed, though Kimball eschews discussions of root causes, he notes, in passing, that the professoriat gave in to the student radicals in the 1960s not simply because of a failure of nerve. Their moral and intellectual collapse "bespoke an essential weakness in liberal ideology."

In other words, though Kimball writes that the America of the late 1940s and early 1950s "was vibrantly alive," not all could have been well in paradise. (That "the Establishment" gave in so readily to the counterculture would seem to confirm this suspicion.) And if the cause of our troubles is in fact quite deep, therapy—even shock therapy—might not be the answer.

Irving Kristol has noted that American students in the 1960s underwent "an existential spiritual crisis," one brought about in large part by inherent weaknesses in the liberal humanistic order, an order that had long since cut itself off from any sense of transcendence. The cultural revolution of the 1960s did not solve this spiritual crisis. Students today are every bit as likely to experience the sense of alienation that their parents did—as evidenced in skyrocketing use of drugs like Prozac and sexual liberation's end run known as the "hook up."

Whether religion is the only answer to liberalism's spiritual crisis remains to be seen. What is clear is this: As long as secular liberalism shuts itself off from and denies people's deepest spiritual needs, cultural revolutions will remain ever present possibilities. Thanks to Kimball we have been reminded of their destructive power. ♦

Germany and the Jews

What did ordinary Germans know and when did they know it? BY JAMES ROSEN

"Murderer! Murderer! Murderer!" more than a thousand German women shouted at the Nazis outside the Berlin building that held their recently arrested Jewish husbands. It was late February 1943 and the prisoners' deportation, which would ensure their deaths under Nazi Germany's "Final Solution," was imminent.

But after a week of demonstrations, Joseph Goebbels, Nazi propaganda minister and gauleiter of Berlin, had heard enough. On March 6, seventeen hundred imprisoned Jewish men were released and the deportation of German Jews in "mixed" marriages was suspended. Though many such Jews were soon re-incarcerated, some survived the war.

Nazi Terror
The Gestapo, Jews, and Ordinary Germans
by Eric A. Johnson
Basic, 600 pp., $35

Other books more fully document the "Rosenstrasse protest"—perhaps the only street demonstration ever conducted against the deportations of German Jews during the Holocaust—but historian Eric A. Johnson vividly recreates this surprising episode in *Nazi Terror: The Gestapo, Jews, and Ordinary Germans*, a long and unrelenting attack on the widely held misperceptions of the Third Reich as an unrestrained police state and the German people as its prostrate victims. The picture he presents is far more complex and, ultimately, far more damning of the German people.

Focusing on Gestapo activity in Cologne, Krefeld, and Bergheim, three German cities of different size and population, Johnson analyzes more than 1,100 Gestapo and Special Court case files, together with German police personnel, Nazi party, and SS records, plus Interior Ministry files and many documents produced after the war (especially denazification and trial records). Finally, Johnson and a colleague surveyed, then conducted follow-up interviews with, hundreds of random Germans living in Cologne in 1993 who returned lengthy questionnaires about the Nazi era.

With his research, Johnson has made a significant contribution to our knowledge of day-to-day crime and punishment under Hitler's reign. Detailed Gestapo case files (peopled by "local Eichmanns" and shadowy Kafkaesque figures named "K." and "Frau T.") conjure the urban milieu of 1930s Germany.

The picture that emerges is as chaotic as any group portrait of any city's dwellers would be, but all of this enables Johnson to address many lingering questions about the Nazi era. Among them: How much did average citizens know about the deportations and mass murder of the Jews and other persecuted minority groups? How much Nazi terror—through the Gestapo and other organs—did ordinary Germans face? To what extent did ordinary Germans play active roles in the Final Solution?

Nazi Terror marks the first major treatment of such issues since 1996, when Harvard associate professor Daniel Jonah Goldhagen published *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*, which provoked wildly polarized reactions among scholars and general readers. Indeed, Johnson poses as a critic of Goldhagen's argument that "'ordinary Germans'

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were animated by . . . a particular type of anti-Semitism that led them to conclude that the Jews ought to die." Goldhagen called this doctrine "eliminationist anti-Semitism" and argued that, over two centuries, it came to "reside ultimately in the heart of German political culture, in German society itself."

But Johnson's minor criticisms of Goldhagen seem almost trumped up, as if masking broader agreement. After all, Johnson's debt to Goldhagen begins with his subtitle, a direct reference to Goldhagen's—which itself tweaked a 1992 book by Christopher Browning, titled *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*. Moreover, Johnson says Browning and Goldhagen "deserve credit" for producing "landmark books." Both, he writes, "demonstrated chillingly that ordinary Germans were also more active than previously believed in the perpetration of the Holocaust."

Johnson pointedly characterizes Nazi executioners as "not so ordinary men"—citing the SS training select squad members received—as if this represented a serious disagreement with Goldhagen. But Johnson admits it was "average citizens" who "formed the core of both the reserve police battalions and the German army." The battalions, for example, contained

> sizable numbers of ordinary, often middle-aged German civilians, with little or no ideological indoctrination or training, . . . called up . . . to shoot thousands of defenseless Jews at point-blank range and then allowed to return to their normal civilian lives.

Johnson echoes other views of Goldhagen's. "The German people should not be regarded as having been passive pawns or terrorized victims of their own government," Goldhagen wrote in 1996. Johnson agrees that "very few" ordinary Germans feared Gestapo arrest during the Third Reich. He estimates the Gestapo employed one officer for every ten to fifteen thousand citizens; thus, between 1933 and 1945, "only about 1 percent of the non-Jewish population was ever investigated by the Gestapo for any reason, and . . . a large percentage of those prosecuted belonged to one or another targeted group." Johnson says Nazi terror "undeniably intensified in the war years, but relatively few Germans experienced it," with most Gestapo investigations of ordinary Germans resulting in "nothing more than a warning."

Hulton-Deutsch Collection / CORBIS

German women in 1933 read a Nazi poster instructing them to boycott Jewish goods.

For all of Johnson's new evidence, however, nothing in it supports his assertion that a "tradition of obsequious submission to authority" stilled the tongues of ordinary Germans during the Holocaust. If anything, this assertion represents a poor substitute for Goldhagen's bolder, and far more logical, argument. As an explanation, "German obedience" seems to leave even Johnson unsatisfied. "Nevertheless," he writes,

> one wonders how so many people could find the courage to dance to forbidden swing music, listen to outlawed BBC and other foreign-language broadcasts, spread jokes and epithets about Hitler and other Nazi leaders, and communicate their discontent with their government and society in myriad ways, but could not summon the courage and compassion to register abhorrence and thereby break the silence about the systematic murder of millions of defenseless and innocent men, women, and children.

Readers may well wonder what Johnson is left "wondering" about. In abundant detail, his book shows how ordinary Germans rejected many Nazi policies—but not the annihilation of the Jews. Clearly, the Final Solution did not matter to ordinary Germans, did not arouse their discontent, as much as other Nazi initiatives. Wouldn't that explain how so many people could "find the courage" to challenge one set of Nazi laws, but not another?

When a society tolerates—let alone applauds—the systematic impoverishment, torture, and murder of its every last Jew, surely it is the historian's duty to acknowledge this society's

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"eliminationist anti-Semitism," to use Goldhagen's term. Would we not rightly regard as "eliminationist racist" any society that mobilized vast resources to impoverish, torture, and murder its every last citizen of African or Asian descent? Johnson's reasoning becomes counter-intuitive when he tries to explain ordinary Germans' boundless tolerance for Jewish misery during those years as a function of something other than anti-Semitism.

If Johnson warily endorses the 'obedience' theory, he positively demolishes another oft-invoked alibi for mass German acquiescence: ignorance. The Final Solution, he establishes, was "no secret at all to most German people beyond childhood." Among the author's archival discoveries were transcripts of long forgotten BBC-produced German-language radio programs, broadcast for maximum propaganda value during the war to an illicit, but widespread, Reich audience. For example, huge numbers of Germans secretly tuned in at eight sharp on December 27, 1942, the first Sunday night after Christmas, only to hear a program entitled "The War Against the Jews," which announced in plain German: "Hitler's regime is murdering hundreds of thousands of completely innocent men, women, and children in cold blood only because they are Jews."

Far from "making hash" of Goldhagen's thesis (as a jacket blurb declares), Johnson's pronouncements on the culpability of ordinary Germans sound as if Goldhagen had written them:

> Collaboration and collusion characterize the activities of the German people much more than meaningful resistance and true dissent.
>
> [The Holocaust] would not have been imaginable without the loyalty, complicity, and silence of the German population. . . . Most went along willingly, even if they did not condone all of Hitler's policies.

Despite such steely observations, Johnson, an immensely gifted historian, never fully embraces the logical conclusion that his prodigious research demands. That would have meant defending the controversial Goldhagen—an act too many Holocaust scholars view as *verboten*. ♦

Bill Murray's Polonius

A Saturday Night Live *alum finds a role in Shakespeare.* BY JOHN PODHORETZ

In the fall of 1975, *Saturday Night Live* premiered on NBC and instantly worked like a fibrillator on moribund American comedy. The show had a crazed energy made up of equal parts countercultural rage and sophomoric high spirits: full of itself, gleefully mean-spirited, and dripping with irony. It was especially committed to the satiric overthrow of prevailing show-business conventions. That was the specialty of Bill Murray, who joined in the second season and shot to stardom with his caricatures of a third-rate lounge singer and an obsequious entertainment reporter, both of whom oozed insincere sincerity.

More than two decades later, Murray is playing, and playing brilliantly, the most insincerely sincere character in all of literature. He is Polonius in the latest film version of *Hamlet*, a movie so pretentious and labored that even though it runs only an hour and fifty minutes, it feels twice as long as Kenneth Branagh's four hour version a few years ago. Writer-director Michael Almereyda's conceit here is that Denmark is a multinational corporation in New York. Claudius is fighting a hostile takeover by Fortinbras, Gertrude is a drunken socialite, Hamlet makes artsy videos, Ophelia is an East Village photographer, and Hamlet's father's ghost seems to reside in a Pepsi vending machine.

Polonius is an exceedingly difficult character to play. He's a sneak and a spy, and Hamlet takes him for a fool—but like most Shakespeare villains, he possesses a narrow and cynical wisdom. Murray finds a rare balance. Polonius plays the fool when he is around his betters. But at home, where he can display the weariness brought on by all the sucking-up he has to do, he offers generous and loving instruction to his children in what he takes to be bitter truths about the meaninglessness of love and generosity.

Murray's triumph as Polonius is the latest unexpected development in a most unpredictable movie career. He was a star from the moment he appeared in his first leading role as an overage camp counselor in a Canadian throwaway film called *Meatballs*, effortlessly funny and touching in what became his patented role—the unambitious slob who grows. In the 1981 *Stripes*, he plays a cab-driving loser who joins the U.S. Army to get in shape and discovers that he is actually a leader ("This is America!" he exhorts his depressed fellow recruits. "We're ten and one!"). In the 1982 *Tootsie*, he's a waiter who writes depressing theater pieces about topics like Love Canal ("I want people to come up to me and say, 'Hey, man, I saw your play. What was that?'").

In the 1984 *Ghostbusters*, a mammoth hit, Murray is an out-and-out fraud—a psychic researcher at Columbia University who gets thrown off campus ("you never studied," his disapproving colleague chides), opens a ghost-removal business, and saves New York from a Sumerian demon. In the 1988 *Scrooged*, he is a misanthropic network executive whose goal is to get everybody in America to watch television on Christmas Eve rather than spending the night with their families. He receives the Dickens treatment and realizes that a live broadcast of *A Christmas Carol* starring Buddy Hackett as Scrooge isn't a good idea.

Wonderful as Murray's shtick was, he began to grow stale by the time the

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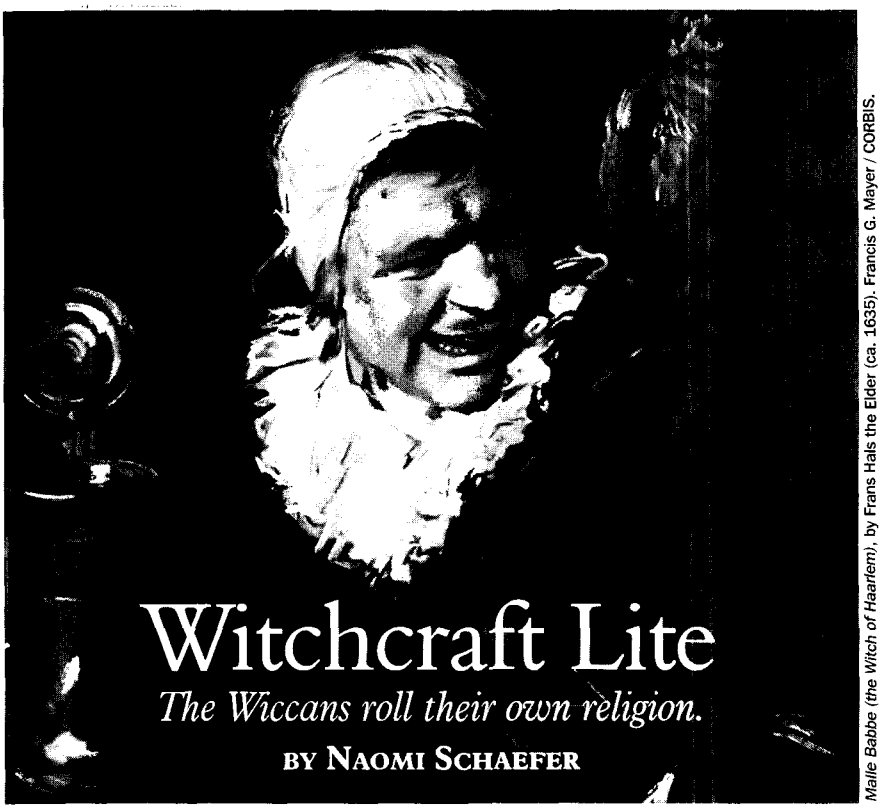
1990s rolled around, as did the other *Saturday Night Live* performers who jumped to the screen. It happened to Dan Aykroyd, Chevy Chase, and Eddie Murphy (until a recent resuscitation) and would have happened to John Belushi if he had lived past 1982. Only Steve Martin made a successful transition into the 1990s, appearing as a harried father in several sentimental family comedies.

But then, in 1993, Murray starred in one of the best movies of the decade, *Groundhog Day*, a fairytale about a popinjay TV weatherman who finds himself reliving the same day over and over again until he learns humility, generosity, and love. Over the course of *Groundhog Day*, Murray must embody grandiosity, panic, rage, suicidal depression, despair, resigned acceptance, and joy—and does so with perfect pitch. It's a performance that deserves to be mentioned alongside James Stewart's in *It's a Wonderful Life*. Like Stewart's George Bailey, Murray's Phil Connors is a man trapped against his will in a small town whose virtues are of no comfort to him. And like Stewart in the second half of his career, Murray has no peer when it comes to the difficult task of playing wrecked men.

That same year, he appeared in a misfire called *Mad Dog and Glory* as a Chicago mobster whose fondest wish is to be a standup comedian. He played a pre-operative transsexual living on the Hollywood fringe in the 1994 *Ed Wood* and last year essayed a has-been ventriloquist in *Cradle Will Rock*. And in 1998, he exuded frustrated misery in a superb and soulful comic turn as a millionaire industrialist whose only friend is a fifteen-year-old boy in *Rushmore*.

With the exception of *Groundhog Day*, these performances are all supporting roles. Murray began his career as a sketch comedian, and what matters in sketch comedy is not how big your part is, but how brightly you burn. He has brought that sensibility to his career, and has become what would have seemed unimaginable back when he was singing the "Theme from Star Wars" on *Saturday Night Live*—a great film actor. ♦



Malle Babbe (the Witch of Haarlem), by Frans Hals the Elder (ca. 1635). Francis G. Mayer / CORBIS.

Witchcraft Lite

The Wiccans roll their own religion.

BY NAOMI SCHAEFER

There are maybe fifty thousand Americans engaged in "Wicca"—enough to make the practice interesting, or at least to make interesting the question of what those fifty thousand see in it. And so, in *The Triumph of the Moon*, the English historian Ronald Hutton has set out to trace the history of modern witchcraft.

The Triumph of the Moon
A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft
by Ronald Hutton
Oxford University Press, 504 pp., $32.50

The story of Wicca, according to Hutton, began in 1936 when Gerald Brosseau Gardner, an unremarkable plantation manager in Singapore, retired to England. There, in the New Forest, he met a wealthy woman known as "Old Dorothy" who claimed to be the leader of a coven that had survived from ancient times. And so, in September 1939 (when most of England had other things on its mind), Gardner became a witch. The rites were depicted by Gardner in his novel *High Magick's Aid* and consisted, as Hutton explains, mainly of naked fertility dances and feasting. The performers "venerated a goddess and a god, whose names were secret, the former predominant in winter, the latter in summer." They claimed North as the most sacred direction, believed in reincarnation, and strained to develop psychic powers. They organized themselves in covens led by a high priestess and priest, and had eight ritual tools, "of which the most important were the knife, the censer, and the cord."

That moment when Gardner met Old Dorothy may have been the last time there was a unified thing called Wicca. Gardner had disciples who anathematized one another, and those disciples had, of course, their own disciples. The successive covens, in the endless detail Hutton presents, resemble grade-school cliques. A psychologist, Charles Cardell, who formed one splinter group, refused to recognize Gardner and his disciples as witches until "they produced the traditional passwords, of which they seemed to be ignorant."

Nonetheless, all Wiccan sects have one thing in common: Each claims a link to ancient paganism. Unfortunately, that's one thing none of them has. Comparing contemporary Wiccan rituals with ancient European religions, studying the language of modern magic spells, and examining archaeological evidence, Hutton shows that no present-day Wiccan sect has roots that antedate 1900. Indeed, many witches now refer to the "Old Religion" as merely a metaphor or a "foundation myth."

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If Wicca does have connections with old religion, it is not paganism but old-fashioned Christian heresy. Many of the original Wiccans considered themselves Christians who had rejected only the "corrupt" Church. Still today, most Wiccans see themselves not as fighting the Judeo-Christian tradition, but as "warriors in a constant battle of good magic against bad." (During World War II, in a ceremony called Operation Cone of Power, a group of witches helped the Allied cause by directing "a cone of magical energy" against Hitler.) Realizing that "witch" conjures up images not of good works but of black hats and broomsticks, modern practitioners insist they are "Wiccans": nature-worshippers, not devil-worshippers.

In Hutton's sample of sixty-four Wiccans, forty-seven were previously atheists. Hutton makes little of this statistic. In fact, he denies that recruits are trying to make up for the lack of religious upbringing. Even if he's right, however, that Wiccans are "people who have already found their purpose in life and wish to enhance and fulfill it," there's a reason they chose pagan witchcraft—for it is "religion" without any strings attached. Its best-known commandment, "Do what you will as long as it harms none," is, to put it mildly, open to interpretation. Even magic—which all Wiccans practice in some form or other—doesn't require real belief. Magical operations, writes Hutton, "are rarely undertaken if they appear to run against the natural course of events or to be based upon unreasonable expectations."

If Hutton dispels suspicions that Wicca involves Satanic practices, he also indicates how thin it is. Lacking stable traditions, rituals, or beliefs, Wicca—upon its arrival in the United States in the 1960s—was first appropriated by feminists, when WITCH (the Women's International Conspiracy from Hell) issued a manifesto that claimed witchcraft "had been the religion of all Europe before Christianity." Its suppression had been "a war against feminism, for the religion had been served by the most courageous, aggressive, independent, and sexually liberated women in the populace." Nine million witches were slaughtered to erase the sect. And to regain their freedom, modern women need to become witches again: "female, untamed, angry, joyous, and immortal."

The bizarre and easily demolished claim that nine million women had been sacrificed for being "independent" is typical of Wicca's continuing availability for co-opting by politically motivated groups (most recently, by environmentalists). And it is an example of why we should perhaps worry about modern pagan witchcraft, thin and silly though it is. Religious movements without beliefs, traditions, or rituals—movements, in other words, that merely play at religion—are empty vessels waiting for someone dangerous to come along and fill them. ♦

A League of His Own

How Woodrow Wilson lost the fight for the League of Nations. BY ALVIN S. FELZENBERG

Louis Auchincloss—the American master of nuance and subtlety who has penned the latest in Penguin's eclectic series of brief biographies—concludes his study of the twenty-eighth president with the admission that there seem to have been "two Woodrow Wilsons."

Woodrow Wilson
by Louis Auchincloss
Viking, 128 pp., $19.95

One was the "sensible, sensitive man of many interests and activities who conscientiously viewed all sides of a question." The other was the "self-idealist who could hardly conceive, much less admit, that he could be wrong."

The first was the dynamic college president, writer, orator, governor of New Jersey, and president of the United States. This was the Wilson who reformed Princeton University's curriculum, enacted a progressive agenda in New Jersey, and guided through Congress the Federal Reserve and Clayton Anti-Trust acts. He was always ready to compromise on his means to achieve his ends, and many observers noticed that he was also capable of abandoning long-held principles in pursuit of ambition.

But the second Woodrow Wilson—ah, that was the man who *never* compromised and often gave the impression that he alone had discerned the true will of the people or, indeed, of the Almighty. It was this second Wilson who suffered the major defeat of his presidency: the failure to bring the United States into the League of Nations.

The battle over the League of Nations pitted the first Democratic president in a generation against the Republican Senate stalwart Henry Cabot Lodge, every inch Wilson's equal in intellect and pigheadedness. Opposition to Wilson's League centered on the obligation the treaty placed on nations to act collectively. This Lodge saw as a weakening of the prerogative to declare war the Constitution grants solely to Congress. But Lodge's real grievance was against the treaty itself—and against the man who proposed it. Far from being an isolationist, Lodge had often urged the United States to act on a world stage. He thought, however, that the treaty's guarantees gave too blatant an invitation to other nations to draw the United States into conflicts that were not of its making or in its interests. Convinced that he had a strong case, Lodge delighted at the opportunity to repay Wilson for years of perceived (and actual) slights.

As Auchincloss admits, Wilson did himself no favors defending the League. The crafty Lodge knew that "reservations" (unlike amendments) do not require that a treaty be renegotiated, and Wilson's failure to acknowledge the dis-

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tinction helped undermine his case. So, too, Wilson's rhetoric suggested that he would use force to advance universal principles: making the world "safe for democracy," the "self-determination" of all peoples, and "open covenants openly arrived at." His claim of deference to the prerogatives of Congress notwithstanding, Wilson insisted that the treaty carried a "moral obligation" superior to any mere legal or constitutional one. When he noted that all treaties cost their signatories some measure of sovereignty in exchange for benefits negotiated, Lodge could hardly have made the point better.

Auchincloss's slender volume serves as a reminder that the dichotomy between Wilson and Lodge was not always as pronounced as either pretended. Unlike many Marxist or leftist biographers, Auchincloss presents the Wilson of 1914 to 1917 not as an anglophile eager to enter World War I, but as a neutral determined to stay out: "Where is any longer the glory commensurate with the sacrifice of millions required by modern warfare to carry and defend Verdun?" the president who said his nation was "too proud to fight" asked in 1915. Wilson's determination not to go to war was intense enough that Lodge speculated the president was pro-German, pointing to Wilson's admiration for German education and his son-in-law's business interests with the investment bank Kuhn Loeb. (Most other accounts see the president as influenced by the pro-British Colonel Edward House, the ambassador Walter Hines Page, and the Morgan merchant bankers.)

Henry Cabot Lodge

When he did at last decide to fight, Wilson acted not to further an abstraction, but—as Lodge himself urged—to preserve a specific national interest, the freedom of the seas. And once in the conflict, the reluctant warrior worked relentlessly to achieve victory. He oversaw the recruitment, training, and placement of more than a million men in France and drove the nation to unprecedented levels of production to back them up. It was only toward the end, when attention turned to peacemaking, that the "second" Wilson took over and all his troubles began.

His first move was to change the war's objective from the defeat of an enemy to a "war to end all wars"—which came as news to the other combatants. Wilson's famous "Fourteen Points" may have enticed the Germans to seek an armistice, but his French and British counterparts never agreed to them, and Wilson's greatest mistake was not making American aid conditional upon their acceptance. From that point on, he was playing a losing game. He spent most of his time at the Paris peace conference arguing the merits of his ideals and pretending the treaty being crafted conformed to them, persuaded that any wrongs would be righted afterwards by the League of Nations. As do all who cover this ground, Auchincloss concludes that Wilson's influence over the conference declined the moment his adversaries figured out he wanted the League so much that he was prepared to pay any price for it.

So why, once he returned home, did Wilson refuse to accept Lodge's reservations? They were a small enough cost for making his dream a reality, and they were less than the compromises he had accepted in Paris.

Auchincloss offers two explanations: the state of his health and the influence of his wife. During and after his tour to promote the treaty, Wilson suffered several strokes that left him partially paralyzed. Auchincloss believes they also

Woodrow Wilson

Pictures this page: CORBIS / Bettmann.

rendered him, for a time, incompetent. In this period, his wife conspired with his doctor to conceal his condition from the public. She became his gatekeeper and representative to the outside world, and banished advisers whose opinions the president had once valued.

Auchincloss is partially right. Edith Wilson insisted she thought more about her husband's welfare than the country's, but her efforts were harmful to both. But it was not she who prevented him from doing what any rational political actor would have done under similar circumstances. Auchincloss notes that the first lady at least once joined the chorus of voices pleading for Wilson to compromise on the eve of a crucial vote. He fails to mention other advice she gave when her husband was still in possession of his capacities. She cautioned Wilson not to inject partisanship into the 1918 wartime elections and to name a prominent Republican to the peace delegation after the Democrats lost control of Congress. He refused both measures.

Auchincloss would have done better—in his search for the key to the two Wilsons—to focus on the words he quotes from a Republican whom the first Wilson would have turned into an ally and the second Wilson turned into a critic. Ex-president William Howard Taft had it right when he said that Wilson and Lodge exalted "their personal prestige and the saving of their ugly faces above the welfare of their country and the world." ♦

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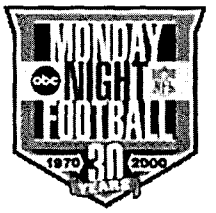
Parody

Rush Limbaugh auditions as a color commentator on ABC's *Monday Night Football.*

—*News item*

Transcript



SHOW: Monday Night Football

November 19, 2001

Week 7: Washington Redskins vs. Dallas Cowboys

Al Michaels: Play by Play
Dr. Laura Schlessinger: Color Commentator

MICHAELS: So Dallas will start its drive on its own 23rd. First and ten. Aikman breaks the huddle and comes up under center. Ismail is wide right.

DR. LAURA: Eek! He's put his hands up under that other guy's googly bits! Leave him alone, you pansy!

MICHAELS: Aikman drops back to pass . . . looking to his right. Redskins blitz. And Aikman is leveled by a vicious blindside hit! Aikman is down. He could be injured.

DR. LAURA: What's he doing lying there like that? Get up, you big baby! Oh, for crying out loud, now the trainer is coming out to help him. Why don't we just have a big cuddle? Why don't we just indulge ourselves?

MICHAELS: Aikman seems to be regaining consciousness . . .

DR. LAURA: Get him off the field already. I came here to watch a football game, not a hospital ward.

MICHAELS: Troy has had several concussions during his professional career, and if this is one it could force his retirement.

DR. LAURA: What? He can't work like the rest of us? Maybe he thought he could prance through life in that homoerotic getup?

MICHAELS: While Aikman is being carted off the field, here's a preview of our half-time show.

DR. LAURA: I see that. You guys are showing the cheerleaders. Get those sluts off the screen! What, are you waiting for . . . their boobies to fall out?

MICHAELS: Filling in next week as color commentator will be Dr. Leo DiCaprio.

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Asia's Dramatic Recovery

Charles Wolf Jr. is senior economic adviser and corporate fellow in international economics at RAND and a senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

East Asia's recovery in 1999 and 2000 has been no less dramatic, though much less publicized, than its economic reversals in 1997 and 1998.

Triggered by the collapse of Thailand's baht in July 1997, four economies that had high positive GDP growth in 1996 experienced *negative* growth (between 5 and 12 percent) in 1997 and 1998. Asset values in these "crisis" countries—Thailand, Korea, Malaysia, and Indonesia—plummeted by about 75 percent owing to currency depreciation, deflated equity, and property valuations. Averaging over the four economies, an asset worth $100 in June 1997 was worth only $25 a year later.

The turnaround of the East Asian economies by the second quarter of 2000 was extraordinary. Korea, Thailand, and Malaysia currently have growth rates equal to or above those of 1996. Indonesia's growth—about 5 percent annually—is surprisingly high as well as shaky because of civil and military unrest in Timor, Atjeh, and Ambon and the ambiguous position of Indonesia's military establishment.

Other indicators of the recovery's strength abound. Capital inflows have resumed, in the form of direct investment rather than debt. Korea, for example, which was almost closed to foreign direct investment before the turmoil of 1997, received $15.5 billion in FDI in 1999, five times the level in 1996. The current accounts of the four economies are now positive, their foreign exchange reserves are above those held in 1996 (except Indonesia), and their currencies, whose exchange rates are now flexible rather than artificially pegged, have regained 50 percent or more of their precrisis values.

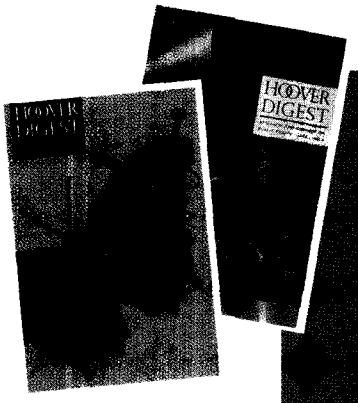
The recovery is all the more impressive because the Japanese economy—long viewed by many as the essential engine for East Asia's recovery—continues to stagnate.

Although the East Asian economic picture is rosy, serious soft spots still exist in addition to Indonesia's problems. Korea's large and amorphous *chaebols* still require reform, as well as explicit nonpreferment in access to credit or other benefactions. One-third of Thailand's bank loans are "nonperforming." Malaysia's Mahathir has perhaps only temporarily backed away from his belief in tightly regulated capital markets.

Nevertheless, the upward trajectory of the Asian economies is likely to endure because of five lessons—four tactical and one strategic—that appear to have been learned from the debacles of 1997–98. (1) As a form of foreign capital inflow, direct investment is far preferable to debt. (2) When borrowing abroad, the repayment period should not be shorter than the yield from the uses to which loans are put. (3) Don't borrow in foreign (hard) currency for purposes whose yields do not generate foreign currency, (at least not without ample foreign exchange reserves). (4) Don't peg domestic currency to the U.S. dollar (unless fiscal and monetary policies and institutions are strong enough to support the peg). (5) In charting development strategy, eschew the so-called Japan development model, which predicated resource allocations not on the basis of market criteria of costs and returns but on nonmarket-based preferment for particular firms or industries.

— Charles Wolf Jr.

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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